CLAIMING TERRITORY: COLONIAL STATE SPACE AND THE MAKING OF BRITISH INDIA'S NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I examine the discursive construction of colonial state space in the context of British India's turn of the century North-West Frontier. My central argument is that notions of a uniform state space posited in official theorizations of the frontier need to be reexamined not as evidence of a particular kind of rule, but rather as a claim to having accomplished it. Drawing on new colonial historiographies that suggest ways of reading archives and archival documents for their silences and on historical sociological understandings of state-formation, I offer close readings of three different kinds of documents: writing about the North-West Frontier by members of the colonial administration, annual general reports of the Survey of India, and narratives written by colonial frontier officers detailing their time and experience of "making" the frontier. I begin by looking at the writings of George Nathanial Curzon and others attempting to theorize the concept of frontiers in turn of the century political discourse. Framed against the backdrop of the "Great Game" for empire with Russia and the progressive territorial consolidation of colonial frontiers into borders in the late 19th century, these arguments constitute what I call a "colonial theory of frontiers." This theory simultaneously naturalizes colonial space and presents borders as the inevitable result of colonial expansion. This theorization, I argue, is particularly important to reexamine as it operates on a set of assumptions that have been adopted into social science notions of territory. These assumptions take space as "given" and static as opposed to fluid, contingent, and contested.

I explore this late colonial theory of frontiers as "claims" to territorial rule by looking at the discourse of cartography in the context of the North-West Frontier. Cartography, like colonial frontier theory, posits a uniform state space where the boundaries of rule are neatly demarcated by borders. A closer examination of maps

along the North-West Frontier, however, suggests that processes of territory making in this region neither conform to simple notions of cartographic demarcation nor to colonial frontier theory more generally. Finally, I suggest that these spaces are better understood as zones of negotiation and state formation where claims of colonial territorial integrity are anything but certain. Such an understanding of territory displaces approaches that tacitly designate places as either state or non-state and demonstrates that claims to territorial control must always be understood in the context of the contingent, contested, and negotiated claims for making space into place.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jason Cons, who was born and raised in Maine, completed a BA with honors in English Literature and American Studies at Wesleyan University. Before returning to graduate school he worked as a freelance writer and reviewer for a number of publications, edited *The Bookpress* in Ithaca, New York, and worked for several years as an instructional designer. He is currently a doctoral student in the Department of Development Sociology at Cornell University.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Recent research on the relationship between "states" and "space" has been concerned with the formation of "state space" (c.f., Goswami 2004, Scott 1998, Vandergeest and Peluso 1994, Lefebvre 1991).[1] The concept of "state space" suggests a notion of the colonization of space by state power, a firm bifurcation between those spaces that are beyond or outside the reach of states and those that fall under their control. The central argument of this thesis is that the concept of state space is a product of official theorizations and space and needs to be reexamined not as evidence of a particular kind of rule, but rather as a *claim* to having accomplished it. I do this by historicizing the notion of territory in the context late 19th and early 20th century projects of colonial border definition.

Exploring the theorization of a "colonial state space" by those concerned with the construction of British India's borders, I suggest that these claims mask the contested and contingent processes of defining and making the colonial frontier. Linking the epistemological underpinnings of colonial notions of "state space" to classic social science conceptions of territory, I argue for a fluid notion of territory that sees both "states" and "space" not as abstract entities, but as the contingent outcomes of complex decisions and negotiations embedded in space and time (Cons, Feldman, and Geisler *forthcoming*).

I argue that processes of "claiming territory must be located against a broad backdrop of late 19th century global economic transformation (the establishment of a

[1] The question of the relationship between state and space has recently been reopened in the context of the spatial turn in the social sciences, the re-assertion of space in critical theory (Soja 1989). This "re-assertion" can be traced, in large part, to emerging interest in the socio-spatial and scaler transformations associated with the current round of globalization (Brenner 1999).

world market dominated by England) and territorial partition and redefinition (the constitution of emergent colonial states and negotiations for territorial control amongst European powers). But more specifically, I am concerned with the making of India's North-West Frontier. By looking at the actual practices of state and border formation along this frontier in late 19th and early 20th century, I offer an alternative view which is sensitive to the contingent, contested, and negotiated production of the frontier. My intent here is not so much to rewrite the history of the North-West Frontier or to catalog the resistance to British spatial expansion, though this is a critical project.[2] Rather, I use my reading of frontier-building as a way to uncover some of what is obscured by the notions of territory as "state space" that have been adopted as scholarly common sense.

In so doing, I suggest a notion of territory that avoids reifying notions of state and space at the same time that it recognizes that the making of territory as a project involves particular kinds of social and geographical reconfigurations and negotiations. Making frontiers is a universalizing task that gives territorial boundaries to colonial power at the same time that it differentiates and homogenizes populations as either inside or outside the bounds of colonial authority. I suggest that exploring the logics and rationales employed by those involved in border demarcation, while examining the processes that such logics and rationales mask, is one way to preserve and understand "the tension between exclusionary practices and universalizing claims of bourgeois culture [that] were crucial to shaping the age of empire" (Cooper and Stoler 1997, 37).

Frontiers and borders are places where conceptions of states as centralized entities, radiating power and influence from centralized locations (c.f., Tambiah 1977),

[2] See Banerjee 2000 for an account of Pathan resistance to British frontier policy in the early 20th century.

can be problamatized and turned on their head (Sahlins 1989, Wilson and Donnan 1998). Studies of such areas also unsettle social science views that imagine states "as a series of blocks defined by state territorial boundaries" (Agnew and Corbridge1995, 79). Works such as Peter Sahlins' classic study of the French-Spanish border in the Pyrenees demonstrate that borders, as "sites and metaphors in the political and cultural construction of a modern world of nation-states" (Sahlins 1998, 31), are critical places to rethink the assumptions about the relationships between state power, ethnicity, and national identity.

Yet borderlands and frontiers are also sites that are critical to the modern concept and perception of the state. The power of maps to visualize both state and nation as a unified whole (c.f. Thongchai 1994, Krishnan 1996, Ramaswamy 2002, Trivedi 2003) is intimately tied to the existence of borders, which are central to constructing state and national space as bounded, continuous, and whole. In this sense, borders, in their power to smooth our view of the uneven contours of states, are central to the production of the state-idea, "the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is"[3] (Abrams 1988 [1977], 82). Borders and frontiers lend credence to ideas of something that can be called a "state space," seemingly to delimit the boundaries of uniform state control.

Taking seriously Abrams' argument that the "relationship between the state-system and the state-idea to other forms of power should and can be central concerns of political analysis" (1988, 82), I read state-formation along turn of the century British India's North-West Frontier against "official theorizations" produced by members of the Colonial government on the role and function of frontiers and borders

[3] A striking assertion of this idea is the relationship between notions of territorial integrity in postcolonial India, campaigns of national unity (*Rashtria Ekta)*, and the careful legal regulation of mapping processes and cartographic representation discussed by Brian Axel (2001, 2002)on his work in the struggle for independent Khalistan.

in colonial politics. These arguments constitute what I will call a "colonial theory of frontiers". This theory discursively constructs frontiers as the simultaneously "natural" boundaries of an emergent colonial state and the necessary political divisions between expanding empire. It posits a natural and uniform boundary of expanding empire, a smooth colonial state space. This discourse, I will suggest, obscures the complex and negotiated processes of state formation at work in making the frontier.

My goal is to undermine simplified notions of territory that, I suggest, can be traced to Weber's classic definition of the state as possessing the legitimate monopoly on violence within a *given* territory. New literature on the relationship between state and space implicitly critique Weber's classic definition (Brenner *et al.* 2001). Yet much of it implicitly or explicitly continues to adopt Weber's reified notion of state and space, reproducing critiques that imagine the state as an abstracted entity, something outside acting on people and place to transform "non-state" space to "state" space (Cons, Feldman, and Geisler *forthcoming).* I historicize this view as emerging against the backdrop of both late 19th century colonial territorial consolidation and, indeed, against a colonial theorization of frontiers with which the Weberian notion of state space shares fundamental assumptions.[4] Sharing concerns with a growing body of literature interested in understanding the colonial production (c.f. Goswami 2004, Carter 1987) and classification (c.f. Sivaramkrishnan 1999, Rangarajan 1996) of space as a technology of rule and with critics seeking to unpack the mutual constitution of empire and the social sciences (c.f., Mitchell 2003, Godlewska 1994), I will read the discursive construction of the frontier against the partices of state formation and negotiations over space at the border. Territory emerges, in such a view, not as a fixed space, contained and controlled by a given entity, but rather as a site where relations of

[4] My argument is not that Weber's ideal typical state is based on colonial notions of state formation, rather that colonial reconfigurations of space make up part of the historical/epistemic backdrop of Weber's methodological innovations.

rule, the politics of access and defense, and contested and multiple meanings of place are worked out (Massey 1994).

Numerous authors have remarked both on the emergence of the nation-state as the enabling moment of the social sciences (c.f., Agnew and Corbridge 1995, Wallerstein 1991, Giddens 1979) and of the fundamental centrality of colonialism in both the development of social scientific thought and analytic conceptions of the European nation-state[5] (Stoler 1995a and 1995b, Stoler and Cooper 1997, Connell 1997, Mitchell 2000; 2003). Authors concerned with this latter view have argued that the colonies should be understood as "laboratories of modernity" (Stoler 1995a and 1994b)—places where the social and scientific projects of modernity were worked out before being returned to the "West"—and that processes of enumeration central to the emergence of the "modern state" in the colonies (Cohn 1987) have constituted the staging ground and unspoken conceptual core of both social science inquiry and modern technologies of rule. Of particular interest to such authors is the bifurcation of state and society as "objects" of inquiry. As Bernard Cohn and Nicholas Dirks have it,

> As society has been separated and freed from the state, social science (the handmaiden of the documentation and certification project) has claimed that society must simultaneously be subjected to scientific study, which itself has the purpose and function of control and manipulation. A combination of paradoxes conspire to make the tentacles of state power (and related forms of state knowledge) appear to be discrete, disinterested, and diffuse; but we believe this to be an illusion" (1988, 227).

Understanding the link between colonial border theory and the emergence of a notion

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[5] Indeed, as Timothy Mitchell has argued, the partitioning of society as the subject of individual disciplines within the social sciences is founded, first, on the appropriation of the nation-state as the primary unit of analysis and, second, on the assumption of a fundamental similarity between each of these units such that they can be seen as similar to Western concepts of state and society. "Each geographical unit was imagined… to possess an economy, portrayed in terms of the novel statistical trope entitled national income; a self-contained political system or state; a homogenous body called society; and even a distinctive national culture. Each unit also came to have an imagined national history" (Mitchell 2003, 155).

of states that naturalizes the category of territory can help identify the ways that social science has helped constitute this notion of state power by adopting "official" theory into "social" theory. Thus, it can begin to show the links, as well as the disjunctures, between the "tentacles of state power." As importantly, it can help point ways towards alternate approaches.

I would like to make two theoretical clarifications before I begin. The discourse of frontiers that I analyze was more than a simple construction or story created by colonial officials. It had material effects. In this sense, this discourse is bound-up in processes of colonial state formation. In recent work, Timothy Mitchell (2002) has shown that the emergence of a category called "the economy"—a slippage from the broader term "economy"—can be traced to late 19th and early 20th century bureaucratic/statistical conception of "national economies" which could be analytically measured and compared to one another. Mitchell's argument is of particular interest in that he makes an analytic move from claims that the emergence of such terms, and their naturalization and adoption within social science inquiry, are social constructions to demonstrate that such concepts are created as *things* by particular forms of emergent bureaucratic power.

> My argument here is not going to be that the economy was a "cultural construction" of the twentieth century, that it was something imagined or invented. Rather, I would like to suggest that in the twentieth century the economy was *made*. The economy was an artifact and, like all things artifactual, was made out of the processes that were as much "material" as they were "cultural," and that were as "real" as they were "abstract." Indeed, these distinctions cannot provide a basis for making sense of how the economy appeared, for the apparent bifurcation of the world into the real and the abstract, the material and the cultural, does not precede the making of the economy. On the contrary, the economy was a set of practices for producing this bifurcation. It was both a method of staging the world as though it were divided in this way into two, and a means of overlooking the staging and taking the division for granted (Mitchell 2002, 82-3).

I find Mitchell's approach extremely suggestive in thinking about frontiers and

borders in the context of colonial border theory and emerging sociological understandings of the state. He provides a way to imagine the simultaneous process of constructing frontiers in the context of late colonial power and the emergence of an understanding of frontiers as particular kinds of boundaries to be imagined in the context of social science discourse. The formation of borders and frontiers, I suggest, should be understood in the same context as what Mitchell calls the "making" of the economy. The process of marking space through the creation of borders and boundaries on the one hand defines a space designated as state and at the same time has real material impacts on the lives of those in border areas. Border-making is, as such, are one of the processes through which a bifurcation between "real" and "abstract" emerged. This abstraction, I argue, can be read in the colonial theory of borders that abstracts territory into state and non-state space. The process of drawing borders and frontiers, maintaining them, and defending them was critical to the 19th century imagination and the "making" of states as discrete, territorially bounded units. This making had real and material consequences that are tied to and masked by the abstract notions of space produced within colonial border theory. To understand these processes, we must look not simply at the process of delimiting a particular territorial claim, but also in the attempts at incorporation, exclusion, and negotiation necessary for their creation.

Second, much of this essay is concerned with the concept of "colonial state space". I borrow this term from Manu Goswami (2004)[6] who uses this phrase to signal the shift from an extractive colonialism under the East India Company to a more territorially entrenched colonial project in post-Mutiny India. Goswami suggests that the concept of colonial state space embodies a particular set of power relations based on territorial control. This project is based on the expansion of institutions such as

[6] Goswami's use of the term is derived from Lefebvre 1991.

railroads and surveys that brought the colonial space of India under more direct territorial administration by the British government. Goswami's term is useful for several reasons. First, it is a reminder, as with Mitchell, that colonial state space was something that was *made*, and that the processes through which it was made must be understood as projects, rather than as political inevitabilities. Second, it helps to contextualize the making of colonial state space against a backdrop of global economic integration. As Goswami (2004, 32) argues, "the making of colonial state space was inseparably part of a broader imperial *scale*-making project, one that sought to secure and maintain a British-centered and globe spanning economy." The "territorialization" of state power, as she puts it, must be understood as mutually constituted by broader global processes. Third, Goswami avoids claims to a uniform state space. Indeed the concept of colonial state space is predicated on its vast unevenness. This is particularly helpful in that it serves to nuance the concept of state/non-state space (c.f., Scott 1998) that homogenizes the complex terrain of state formation into a simple binary of presence and absence. Colonial state space, as a term, signals the mutually constitutive relationship between the production of colonial space and broader political-economic processes at the same time that it suggests a profoundly uneven, contingent, and contested process of territorialization. I add a further dimension to Goswami's term. I will argue that the idea of colonial state space was a theoretical category developed in the late 19th century as a *claim* about having accomplished a particular kind of rule. My argument is not that these claims should be disregarded or that they did not correspond, directly and indirectly, to the processes of domination and moral regulation of the frontier. Rather, it is that such claims must be read against the grain of processes of frontier and state formation to understand both the logics territory making and the material outcomes and negotiations which are overwritten within colonial frontier theory.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. First I explore the colonial theory of frontiers in some detail. Particularly, I look at the work of George Nathanial Curzon and several other authors concerned with the construction of the North-West Frontier. Located against the backdrop of the "Great Game," their writing simultaneously positions frontiers as the logical and necessary outcome of colonial expansion, safely dividing the world into colonial spaces legally and strategically cordoned off from each other by borders and managed frontiers. It also naturalizes the concept of frontiers, positioning them as the "natural" outcomes of expansion, reinforced by technical expertise. In the second chapter, I trace this theory, which constitutes a notion of colonial state space, through the emergence of the concept of "territory" in the social sciences by way of Weber. Arguing that while Weber's ideal-typical understanding of states is based on European state formation, his theory must be epistemcially and historically located against the same global backdrop as the colonial theory of frontiers. I suggest that writing on territory that draws explicitly or implicitly on Weber's classic definition of the state adopts the same assumptions and concerns contained within the colonial theory of borders. As such, it uncritically accepts the naturalization and smoothing over of contingency embodied in that theory. In the third chapter, I begin to problematize the colonial theory of space by looking at cartography, one of the discourses central to the colonial theory of frontiers. By exploring the progress of surveying along the North-West Frontier, I suggest that the clear picture of state space offered by colonial border theory is, in practice, much more uncertain and unstable. In my last chapter, I continue to reconstruct a notion of territory by looking at the processes of negotiation over space at work along the turn of the century North-West Frontier.

CHAPTER 2

A LATE COLONIAL THEORY OF FRONTIERS

In 1907 Lord Curzon of Kedleston delivered the annual and prestigious Romanes Lecture at Oxford University. Curzon, recently returned from his somewhat infamous tenure as India's Viceroy,[7] devoted his lecture to the subject of frontiers. "I concluded that my best course of action [upon having been invited to deliver the lecture] would be to select some topic of which I had personal experience, and upon which I could, without presumption, address even this famous and learned University" (Curzon 1976 [1907], 3). Frontiers were a central concern both in Curzon's youthful travels in Britain's expanding empire (Curzon 1896 a, b, and c and 1923) and in his tenure as Viceroy where he "had been responsible for the security and defence of a Land Frontier 5,700 miles in length, certainly the most diversified, the most important, and the most delicately poised in the world" (1976 [1907], 4). Curzon begins his remarks by observing a paucity of academic studies of frontiers despite their increasing centrality in politics and governance in the context of British colonial expansion in Africa and Asia.[8]

> You may ransack the catalogues of libraries, you may search the indexes of celebrated historical works, you may study the writings of scholars, and you will find the subject almost wholly ignored. Its formulae are hidden in the arcana of diplomatic chancelleries; its documents are embedded in vast and forbidding collections of treaties; its incidents and what I may describe as its incomparable drama are the possession of a few silent men, who may be found in the clubs of London, or Paris, or Berlin, when they are not engaged in tracing lines upon the unknown areas of the earth (1976 [1907], 4-5).

Curzon's lecture both celebrates the importance of frontiers in modern state craft and makes a theoretical argument for a new "scientific frontier." At the time, "the

[7] For overviews of Curzon's viceroyalty, see Dilks 1969 and 1970 and Glimour 2003.
[8] See Holdich 1916 for a similar complaint.

scientific frontier", was a euphemistic term for the pacification and securing of Afghanistan as a buffer state to protect India from an expansionist Russian empire to the North (c.f. Andrew 1880). But Curzon's argument is a slightly more expansive one, imagining the frontier as the scientific formalization of the "natural" boundaries of Indian Empire. As Curzon has it:

> It would be futile to assert that an exact Science of Frontiers has been or is ever likely to be evolved: for no one law can possibly apply to all nations or peoples, to all Governments, all territories or all climates. The evolution of Frontiers is perhaps an art rather than a science, so plastic and malleable are its forms and manifestations. But the general tendency is forward, not backward; neither arrogance nor ignorance is any longer supreme; precedence is given to scientific knowledge; ethnological and topographical considerations are fairly weighed; jurisprudence plays an increasing part; the conscience of nations is more and more involved. Thus Frontiers, which have so frequently and recently been the cause of war, are capable of being converted into the instruments and evidence of peace (1977 [1907] 53-4).

Curzon's lecture opens several interesting possibilities for analysis. The not-so-veiled subtext of the lecture is India's North-West Frontier, the pivotal frontier in the "Great Game for Empire"[9] played throughout the 19th and early 20th century between a Southward expanding Russia and a Northward expanding British India. At stake were the trading routs of central Asia and, ultimately, India itself. At the time, the "Game" was both a critical problem of British imperial policy (Mahajan 2002) as well as a central trope in British conceptualizations of empire (Piper 2002, Barrow 2003). The "Game" began in the early nineteenth century with Wellesley's rapid expansion of colonial power into the subcontinent and Tsar Paul 1's disastrous campaign South towards Khiva and continued through World War I (Hopkirk 1992).[10] While Russia was only the latest in a series of rival "great powers" perceived as

[9] For a detailed and decidedly imperial description of the on-the-ground events and major (British and Russian) players in this game, see Hopkirk 1992 and Meyer and Brysac 1999.
[10] Indeed, many have noted the ties between Great Game politics and the current political crisis in Afghanistan (c.f. Rashid 2000).

threatening India, the expansion of Russian imperial power into central Asia was cast as the harbinger of invasion from the North through Afghanistan—the Northern "Gates of India" (Holdich 1910)—following the trajectory of waves of Indian invasion throughout the preceding centuries. Against the backdrop of the Great Game, Curzon's claims that frontiers stand to become instruments of peace reads like a colonial manifestation of a "good fences make good neighbors" approach to foreign policy; a belief that formalized frontiers could successfully stem expanding colonial empires before they disastrously and violently collided in the high passes of central Asia.

Curzon's argument directly highlights both the official North-West Frontier of India and the "protectorate" of Afghanistan beyond it as central to India's security. His concerns, in this sense, echo and reiterate broad policy arguments over the defense of India's Northern borders throughout the late 19th and early 20th century. Upon assuming the Viceroyalty in 1876, for example, Lord Lytton, exasperated by what he saw as a "do nothing" policy towards the frontier and dissatisfied with the informal boundary with Afghanistan observed that "the value of an obstacle such as a great river, or a mountain range, depends upon the command on both sides of the obstacle" (quoted in Sharma 1986, 214). Lytton, "urged forward by considerations of military and political expediency, and by the instinct of self-preservation, towards the Hindukush, the great natural boundary between India and Central Asia" (quoted in Sharma 1986, 214), argued a need for both the demarcation of a formal border with Afghanistan and a push to bring the country within the sphere of British political influence.

In 1902, 26 years later, the question of Afghanistan and the North-West frontier still loomed large in British policy debates. As Former Viceroy of India and then Foreign Secretary Lord Lansdowne argued at the time:

It has…been one of our principal objectives to encourage and strengthen the

> states lying outside of the frontier of our Indian empire, with the hope that we should find in them *an intervening zone sufficient to prevent direct contact between the dominions of Great Britain and those of other great military Powers.* We could not however maintain this policy if in any particular instance we should find that one of these intervening states was being crushed out of national existence, and falling practically under the complete domination of any other power (quoted in Mahajan 2002, 20. Emphasis Mahajan).

Indeed concerns about Russian territorial aggression led to England's Defense Committee of the Cabinet establishing the Committee of Imperial defense in 1902. As Mahajan notes, the nominal goal of the Committee was to plan for defense of the empire at large, yet "of the eighty-two meetings held during Balfour's tenure as Prime Minister, forty-three were devoted almost entirely to the vexed problem of safeguarding the Indian Empire" (Mahajan 2002, 148).

The question of dealing with Russia and establishing Afghanistan as a buffer state served to consolidate the complex debates on imperial expansion and policy that had raged in Parliament throughout the 19th century into two primary schools. The first, the "Closed Border School," influenced by the disastrous results of India's second war in Afghanistan (1866-7), advocated a policy, of non-interference in Afghan affairs. The second, euphemistically known as the "Forward School," derided its opponents as pursuing a policy of "masterly inactivity" and advocated using the Kabul-Kandahar line as a forward defense against Russian advancement. This policy eventually led to the third Afghan war in 1880, which comfortably brought Afghanistan within the Government of India's sphere of influence and led to a large project of demarcating Afghanistan's northern border (Davies 1975 [1932]).

Yet, in India, the project of defending against Russian expansion also involved the process of physically creating the kind of frontier described by Curzon, not just through establishing buffer states to protect against Russian advance, but also through mapping the network of mountain ranges along India's North-West Frontier, constant

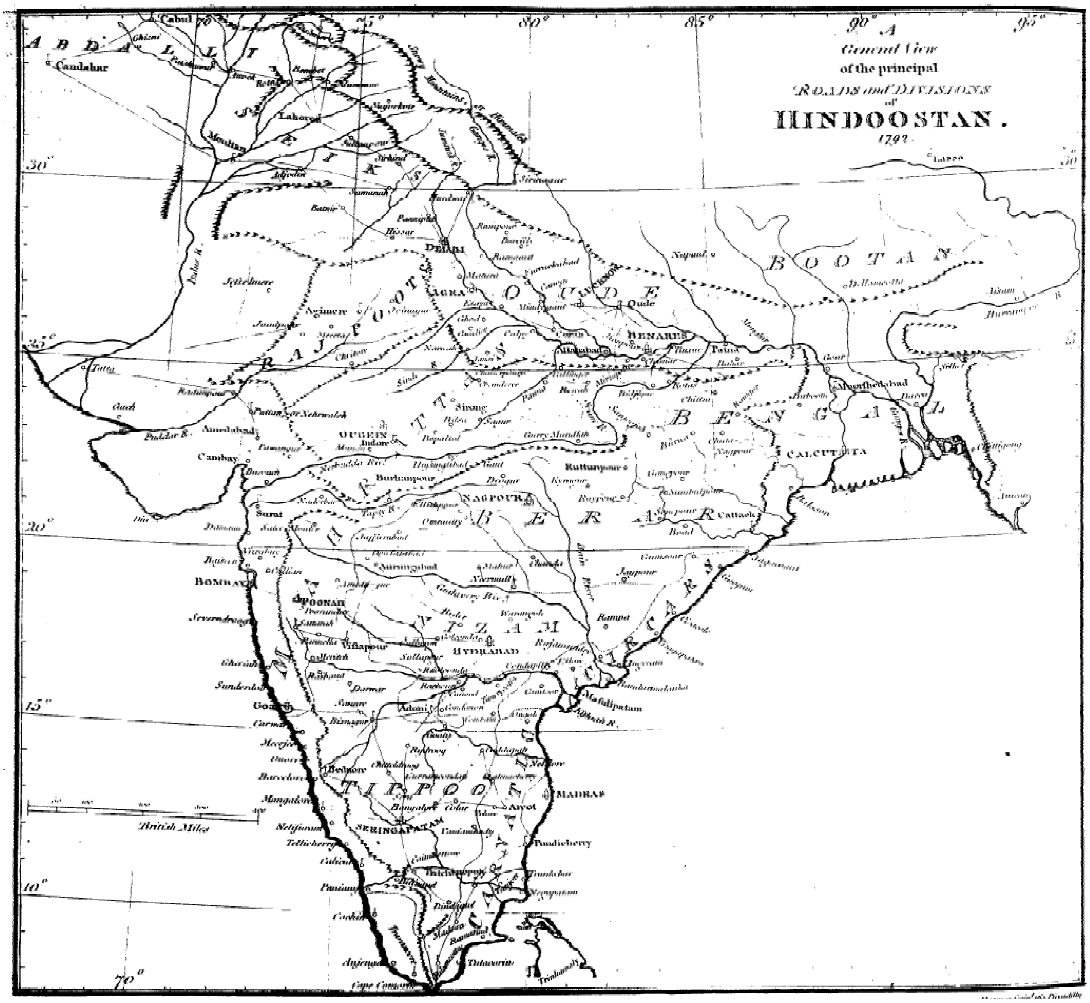

Figure 1: General View of the Principle Roads and Divisions of India, James Rennel, 1792

processes of negotiating and demarcating boundary lines, and "managing" the populations living in what Curzon refers to as these "unexplored" and "uninhabited" areas. Part of this process involved an unprecedented project of defining and managing India's borders and the "frontier" zones around them. This project can be seen in the fixing of borders on colonial maps. In the late 18th and early 19th century, as Surveyors such as James Rennel began to assemble the infrastructure of the Survey of India (Philimore 1945, Edney 1997, Barrow 2003), India's borders, and particularly the borders of the North-West Frontier, were fuzzy and ill-defined, largely abutting the blank space on maps where surveyors, explorers, and mapping projects were yet to be

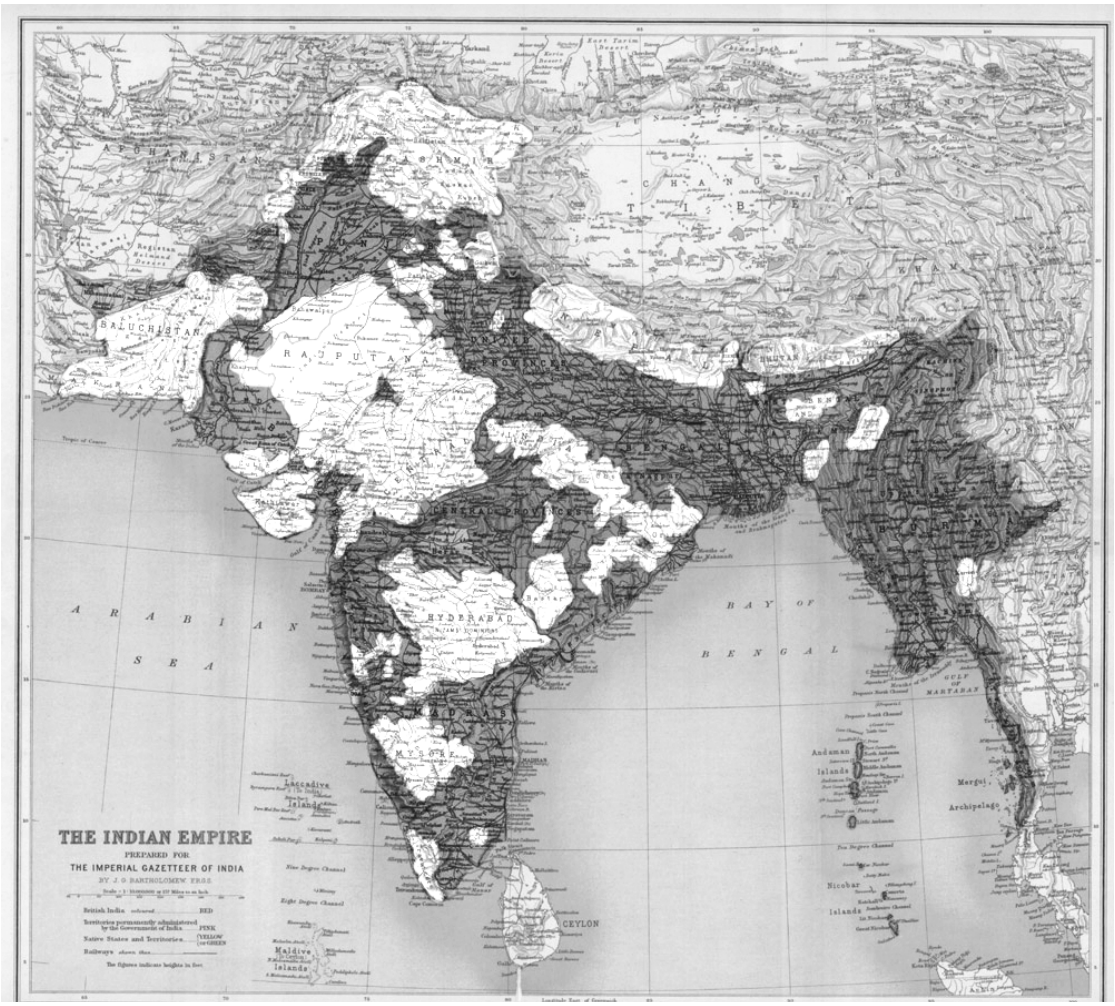

Figure 2: Gazetteer of the Survey of India, The Indian Empire, 1909

undertaken (Figure 1). Yet by the time of Curzon's lecture, the Crown had, to a certain extent, consolidated both its geographic knowledge of the mountainous areas along its North-West Frontier and negotiated a series of boundaries that formalized the Northern borders of India. Whereas Rennel's 1792 map of the roads and divisions of India show a vague Northern Frontier, the general map from the Imperial Gazetteer in 1909 (Figure 2) reflects a century of exploration, mapping, and creation of what Mathew Edney (1997) has called a "a cartographic archive," a project of fitting all of India into an empirically knowable cartographic frame. As such, the 1909 map demonstrates the vast expansion of geographic knowledge available at the time as well as the hard and fast demarcated line of the official border running along all of India's

land frontiers, the product of a century of British expansion and consolidation. Curzon's methodical hierarchy ultimately and self-consciously positions this newly formed and defined frontier, particularly the North-West portion of it, as the safest and "most scientific" of frontiers, simultaneously protected by a line of demarcation negotiated by treaty, a steep and inhospitable mountain range, and the protectorate of Afghanistan. Curzon's essay, in its explication and justification of frontiers as tools of statecraft might be read as an attempt to valorize and legitimize both the historical project of demarcating India's Northern borders in general, and the making of the North-West Frontier, a project his viceroyalty had been centrally concerned with (Dilks 1970, Curzon 1925), in particular.[11]

However, I wish to undertake a slightly different reading of Curzon's lecture. Curzon's argument is historically grounded against this struggle for Empire in Central Asia, as well as the broader frame of the division of Africa at the Berlin Conference in 1884-5. Curzon might further be seen against the backdrop of what Arrighi (1994) refers to as the dialectic of capitalism and territorialism, the creative tension between the proximate emergences of a British dominated world market and nation-states. As Goswami argues,

> The reconfiguration of political-economic space along self-consciously national developmentalist and statist principles, during the late 1870s and 1880s, not only entailed a crisis for Britain's global hegemony but made the contradictions of colonial practices both more apparent and acute" (2004, 33).

This point is similar to Mitchell's (2002) observation that the emergence of "national economies" in this period was intimately tied to the territorialization and definition of space. Curzon's lecture, then, comes at a moment when questions of territory, frontiers, and states where critical political and economic issues. Curzon's argument,

[11] Indeed, from Curzon's perspective this project may have looked quite successful in 1907 with a new atmosphere of entent with Russia in relation to an increasingly antagonistic relationship with Germany (Mahajan 2002).

and the arguments of a number of his contemporaries concerned with the defense of the North-West Frontier, is a particular kind of political theorization of territory. These arguments rationalize a notion of colonial state space,[12] one that is either directly under colonial control, within the sphere of colonial political influence (Afghanistan), or beyond administrative reach.[13] These visions are important not just because they provide a teleological legitimation for empire, and particularly for British expansion towards Afghanistan, but also because, I will suggest, views of territory which naturalize the idea of a colonial state space have been broadly adopted into social science literature, by way of Weber, on both borders and territory.

Curzon theorizes frontiers and borders as the definitive sign and site of the emergent colonial state.

> Frontiers are indeed the razor's edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, of life or death to nations. Nor is this surprising. Just as the protection of the home is the most vital care of the private citizen, so the integrity of her borders is the condition of existence of the State" (1976 [1907, 7).

If frontiers are a razor's edge of war and peace, then they also emerge as critical sites of state-craft. The science of frontiers (or the movement towards a scientific frontier) becomes, for Curzon, the defining moment of the emergent state system. Frontiers are the critical boundaries of diplomacy. Their "intrigue and romance" is the story of war and peace. Further, they are the problems of a particularly modern form of state power intimately tied to colonial expansion. "Frontier wars will not, in the nature of things, disappear. But the scramble for new lands, or for the heritage of decaying States, will

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[12] This term is not explicitly used by either Curzon or any of the other writers thinking about the North-West Frontier in this time period. I borrow this term from Goswami (2004) who in turn borrows it from Lefebvre 1991). As will be apparent from my critique, I wish to criticize its adoption into the social sciences rather than leverage it as an analytic term for understanding empire.

[13] It may be observed that these categories correspond, at least in part, to the concepts of direct and indirect rule of the princely states. I argue, however, that a critical component of Curzon's and others' theorization of the "frontier" is the concept of bounding state space, less critical to the concept of the princely state.

become less acute as there is less territory to be absorbed and less chance of doing it with impunity, or as the feebler units are either neutralized, or divided, or fall within the undisputed Protectorate of a stronger power" (1976 [1907], 8).

The projects of border definition might be thought of as the process of transforming the frontier from a horizon of expansion, as in Fredrick Jackson Turner's classic definition, to a formalized political zone. As former surveyor and leader of the Russo-Afghan boundary commission Thomas Holditch[14] described it, "the first and greatest object of a national frontier is to ensure peace and goodwill between contiguous peoples by putting a definite edge to the national political horizon, so as to limit unauthorized expansion and trespass" (Holditch 1916, x).[15] It is in this sense that Curzon uses the term "frontier" in his Romaines lecture, as a formalized political zone legally designating a space between two expanding powers.[16]

Notable in both Holdich and Curzon is the definition of frontiers in relation to an external presence. The frontier is here presented as a means of defining space *between* nations. The implicit other here is Russia. As Holdich writes,

> The greatest historical example of the expansion of a civilised nation into regions where there was little or nothing of the natural wilderness of nature, but where step by step new territory was acquired and new frontiers pushed forward in spite of the determined resistance of a whole series of minor nationalities not so far removed ethnically or socially from their conquerors, is afforded us by the advance of Russia into Central Asia" (1916, 77).[17]

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[14] Holdich wrote extensively not just on his experiences as a surveyor but on the correct and proper definitions of borders and frontiers. His theoretical writing bears a remarkable similarity to Curzon's argument, though the two do not directly reference each other.

[15] The term "peoples" in Holditch's definition should be recognized as designating western, white, imperial power.

[16] There is a slippage in much of the writing on the "frontier" which easily modulates between the frontier as a demarcated border and a frontier zone of varying width around that border (Wilson and Donnan 1999).

[17] It's worth observing, here, Holdich's imperial linguistic frame which simultaneously racializes the "minor nationalities" of Central Asia and biologically dismisses Russia's claim to legitimate occupation by linking them to these Central Asian minorities through ethnicity. Holdich here echoes racialized liberal notions of empire that justify colonial expansion as a "civilizing" mission (Mehta 1999).

Russian expansion southward is constructed as the teleological barrier for expansion; a counter force to British colonialism. As Holdich argues,

> The frontier of an expanding country is primarily elastic, reaching outwards under pressure from within and occupying an indefinite area which is gradually to be assimilated with that of the districts already brought under central control. No limit is set to a frontier until an actual line of boundary is defined by treaty; even then it is generally open to dispute until that boundary is actually demarcated. It is only when two equally powerful nations expanding in opposite directions meet and the demand for a settled boundary becomes insistent that boundary commissions step into the field (1916, 76-7).

Echoing Curzon's claims for the frontier as an instrument of peace, Holdich's commentary argues both a teleology and an inevitability to the project of border definition along the North-West Frontier. With an advancing Russian empire pushing up against colonial possessions, colonial expansion in India is presented as having reached its logical limits. This moment of expansion is the moment when legal definitions of territory must be set up to ensure a peaceful ongoing relationship between nations. The political frontier, then, is a problem of the late colonial period. It is the formalized marker of the parceling of the world by colonial powers, the limits of expanding empire. It formalizes an area of colonial control, a colonial state space.

Yet while the political frontier is positioned as belonging to a particular geo-political moment—the collision of empires in a colonial space—the frontier is simultaneously imagined as something scientific, technical, and "natural," such that frontiers can be seen as dividing expanding empires along their correct, precise, and natural, as well as necessary, boundaries. To explore this tension in more detail, it is useful to return to Curzon's three-tiered construction of the modern frontier. Curzon's argument begins with a discussion of the "natural" frontier. Natural frontiers are the frontiers that have historically formed the contours of the emergence of states. They are "natural" in the sense that they are extra-political, the logical and correct frontiers

between states. Natural frontiers are conceptualized as geographic formations—such as deserts, rivers, oceans, and mountains—that naturally divide civilizations or nations. "Natural frontiers," as Holdich writes, "possess many advantages over artificial ones. They are readily delimited and demarcated; they are inexpensive and immovable; they last well under all conditions of climate, and they are, as a rule, plain and unmistakable" (1916, 147). In this rationale, imperial expansion into the subcontinent throughout the 19th century is seen as a natural movement towards the network of mountains surrounding India to the North.

It is useful to recall, here, Lucien Febvre's words on the concept of the "natural" frontier. Febvre, in his historical reexamination of the fluid linguistic and conceptual meanings of "*frontière,*" famously observed that the claims of a "natural" frontier between France and its neighbors were, far from unproblematic recognitions of the boundaries of French political and cultural sway, in fact political claims to rights of domination. Febvre treats this insight as an obvious interpretation of national rhetoric.

> Do we really have to spend time showing that river or coastal frontiers have nothing 'natural' about them or, more generally speaking, that the concept of natural frontiers corresponds to nothing whatsoever for the geographer, that there is nothing 'given ready made' to man by nature and nothing that geography can impose upon politics? It is quite pointless to prove yet again something that has been shown many times, that, in reality, in the concept 'limits marked out by nature' nature only serves as a mask; it is the mask worn by long-standing historical and political facts, the memory of which men had retained over centuries. For the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees are nothing but the limits of ancient Gual. They are not natural frontiers. They are historical frontiers… (1973, 215).

Febvre's somewhat curt dismissal, resonant with Abrams' (1988) notion of "the state" as the mask which simultaneously obscures and gives coherent organized shape to political practice, undermines the notion of natural frontiers as the most thinly veiled of ideological claims. His missive is a reminder that there is nothing natural about

national territory, that borders are the outcomes of protracted political process, and that these historical processes, far from inevitable, are always contested and contingent (for similar critiques of the nation-state see Anderson 1992 [1983], Sahlins 1989, Thongchai 1994). This observation is, no doubt, true of the North-West frontier (and the colonial theorization of borders in general), but it over hastily dismisses the salience of these concepts in the theorization of colonial space. Indeed the concepts of "natural" are here freely mixed by Curzon and Holdich in a way that highlights the issue of security and the need for the construction and maintenance of frontiers at the same time that it positions them as inevitable, the outcomes of geological processes.

The two concepts of natural and political are formally combined in Curzon's second category of frontier: the artificial frontier. While, according to Curzon, features such as mountains, oceans, and rivers, have, in the past, protected and enabled both the expansion and defense of empires,[18] modern technology, specifically steam power, has heralded the need for new forms of protection and state-craft around the frontiers. While natural frontiers serve as the contours that define the space of the nation, or more specifically the limits of colonial expansion, these frontiers must be formalized by technical means in the context of empire. Curzon parcels artificial frontiers into two categories: physical (walls, ramparts, ditches, etc.) and a more vague conceptual category associated with geography and the modern state. As Curzon observes:

> [The commoner forms of Artificial Frontiers] are three in number: (I) what may be described as the pure astronomical Frontier, following a parallel of latitude or a meridian of longitude; (2) a mathematical line connecting two points, the astronomical coordinates of which are specified; and (3) a Frontier defined by reference to some existing and, as a rule, artificial feature or condition. Their common characteristic is that they are, as a rule, adopted for

[18] Interestingly, Curzon attributes Brittan's great power status to it's natural geographical advantage as an island, with natural frontiers created by the sea. It's worth noting that this, too, is an obscuration of the long and violent history of conflict between England and it's "internal colonies" (Hechter 1975), its internal projects of territorial expropriation (discussed by Polanyi (1957) and Marx (1959) among many others), and the particular histories of British colonial expansion.

> purposes of political convenience, that they are applied in new countries where the rights of communities or tribes have not been stereotyped, and where it is possible to deal in a rough and ready manner with unexplored and often uninhabited tracks (1976 [1907], 34).

Curzon's argument dismisses the notion of a purely artificial frontier as an imperfect political expedient, an empty concept in and of itself. His language suggests particular kinds of abstract notions of measurement and demarcation. Artificial frontiers draw specifically on enlightenment notions of scientific exactness. Through the technical expertise of surveyors and cartographers, artificial frontiers (maps) demarcate and delineate state spaces, marking them with a rational cartographic language of precision that organizes space within a specific frame of imperial knowledge (Mitchell 2002). This category of "frontier" might be thought of, more specifically, as the demarcation of exact borders, or the location of administrative, as opposed to natural, divisions between states that have expanded to their logical (imagined as simultaneously natural and abutting competing expanding empires) geographic limits. But it is important to note the tentative nature of Curzon's argument. They, like natural frontiers, are incomplete in and of themselves. The powerful and effective modern frontier is found in their combination. As Holdich argues,

> It will need but little historical knowledge to reveal that these seas and rivers, mountains and lakes, where they occur, have proved to be the most lasting and the most effective barriers that have been accepted as political frontiers. Nevertheless, artificial boundaries have had their use in the making and dividing of nationalities, and there seem to be indications that such artificial methods of keeping communities apart may figure far more largely in the future—in combination with natural topographical features—than they have done in the past (1916, 161-2).

Artificial frontiers, in this sense, add technical and legal precision to the historical "natural" frontiers of states.

Indeed, as Holdich argues, it is only technical expertise that makes these lines feasible and possible. Holdich suggests that the greatest danger to the integrity of the

frontier is the hasty line adopted by necessity, as opposed to the carefully demarcated one based on measurement, knowledge, and patience, as expanding empires meet.[19] Indeed, in a phrase that has chilling resonance with the British rationalization of Partition in 1947, Holdich states,

> The delimitation of a frontier is the business for treaty makers, who should decide on trustworthy evidence the line of frontier limitation which will be acceptable to both the high contracting parties with all due regard to the local conditions of topography and the will of the peoples who are thus to have a barrier placed between them. These are the two first and greatest considerations, and they involve a knowledge of local geography and ethnographical distribution (1916, 179).

Drawing on a rhetoric of geodetic accuracy, which as Holdich suggests is the only way in which maps covering the expanding geographically known world can be resolved with one another, artificial frontiers are political formalizations of the "natural" frontier. In essence, they are natural frontiers written in an international legal language that can be recognized by the expanding great powers and accepted by the passive populations who are divided by them. These two categories of frontiers, then, fuse legitimizing rhetorics of empire: they naturalize an emergent colonial space at the same time that they claim formal accuracy through an enlightenment epistemology of measurement and precision (c.f., Cohn 1987, Ludden 1993).

Curzon's final category of frontiers shifts emphasis away from the borders of the emergent colonial state and into spheres of political influence. As Curzon writes,

> In the last quarter of a century, largely owing to the international scramble for the ownerless or undefended territories of Africa and Asia, fresh developments have occurred in the expansion of Frontiers…. All of the expedients to which I am about to refer are varieties in differing stages of the doctrine of Protectorates which has existed from the remotest days of Empire" (1976 [1907], 37).

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[19] Holdich's own project of delimiting Afghanistan's northern boundary is exhaustively detailed in his *The Indian Borderland, 1880-1900* (1987 [1910]).

These "modern expedients" are arguments about territorial protection through the development of buffer-states: states or principalities where a significant amount of political control can be exercised (ranging from full protectorates to sphere's of political influence). Buffers supplement natural and artificial frontiers by hemming the boundaries of "civilized" colonial space from uncivilized/uncolonized space, or oppositional colonial space, outside. Curzon argues that this form of frontier accounts for the successful expansion of British India into the bounded space of the sub-continent.

> It has been by a policy of Protectorates that the Indian Empire has for more than a century pursued and is still pursuing, its as yet unexhausted advance. First it surrounded its acquisitions with a belt of Native States with whom alliances were concluded and treaties made. The enemy to be feared a century ago was the Maratha host, and against this danger the Rajput States and Oude were maintained as a buffer. On the North-west Frontier, Sind and the Punjab, then under independent rulers, warded off contact or collisions with Beluchistan and Afghanistan, while the Sutlej States warded off contact with the Punjab. Gradually, one after another, these barriers disappeared as the forward engulfed in the advancing tide, remaining embedded like stumps of trees in an avalanche, or left with their heads above water like islands in a flood (1976 [1907], 39).

While it is notable that Curzon's argument presents the existence of princely states[20] as obsolete historical artifacts, by arguing the importance of buffer frontiers in state-craft, Curzon makes a case for particular kinds of political solutions to "military" problems. Here, the potentially violent collision between two expanding states is translated into a project of establishing buffer zones that divide and separate expanding empires. The game of frontier politics, is subtly revealed here as a project of influence, extending particular kinds of control outward from borders into zones that protect but have not been officially folded into colonial space.

Curzon's argument maps onto imperial policy in Afghanistan. He makes a case

[20] The literature on the princely states is huge, but see Metcalf and Metcalf 2002 for a general overview of indirect rule through the princely states.

for what poet and Orientalist Alfred Lyall (1891) dubbed the "double frontier," the simultaneously natural and artificial North-West Frontier, and the buffer state of Afghanistan beyond it. Here, Afghanistan is conceptualized as the critical buffer of expansion, the space cushioning the secured zone of India from Russian ambition. As a first line of attack, Afghanistan is outside of direct political control, but within the sphere of influence.[21] As Lyall argued in an article in *The Nineteenth Century*,

> As soon as we had reached the geographical limits of India—the range of mountains which separate it from Central Asia, and which form perhaps the strongest natural barriers in the world—one might have thought that the protectorates, which are artificial fortifications of our exposed border, would be no longer needed. On the contrary, they have grown with the expansion and rounding off of our dominion; and the empire in its plentitude seems to find them more necessary than ever. We have run our administrative border up to the slopes of the hills that fringe the great Indian plains; but on the north-west we are not contented with the guardianship of a mountain wall. We look over and beyond it to the Oxus, and we see Russia advancing across the Central Asian steppes by a process very like our own. She conquers and consolidates, she absorbs and annexes, up to an inner line; and beyond that line, in the direction of India, she maintains a protected State. The Oxus divides Bokhara from Afghanistan, the Russian from the English protectorate (1891, 317).

This articulation of buffers further displaces attention outward and away from the politics of internal control and towards a model of influence extending from a centralized state into ever more remote surrounding states. The focus of colonial frontier theory is thus displaced from the already naturalized frontier into the political zones beyond it.

In this chapter, I have outlined a late colonial theory of borders and frontiers. This theory, as an argument for a particular vision of colonial space, makes the double move of arguing the need for frontiers as modern tools of statecraft and of naturalizing

[21] It is also worth noting that Curzon's language sets up Afghanistan as a buffer within the context of the great game—a necessary space that it neither within the borders of empire nor beyond its political influence. Buffers here are necessary for imperial protection from Russian advance. This seems to suggest that if the Russian state were to be neutralized or pushed back from its central Asian interests, then Afghanistan would and could be peacefully incorporated into the official boundaries of empire.

the concept of frontiers as the legal and natural boundaries of empire. This theorization offers a legitimizing narrative of territory and borders that naturalizes a particular kind of expansionist view of colonial space. It will be my goal in the rest of this essay to understand these as claims to a particular kind of rule, to take Ann Stoler's observation that, "Colonial rhetoric was not a reflection or legitimation of European power, but a site of negotiation over its nature" seriously (Stoler 1995a, xxiii). However, first I would like to emphasize the importance of this colonial theorization by taking a brief look at the similarities and differences between this colonial theory of frontiers and the emergence of the concept of territory in the social sciences. While, on the face of things, colonial border theory and the Weberian territorial state appear different, I will suggest both draw on the same naturalized notion of space. This reliance has serious implications for the ways that frontiers, borders, and territory have been explored in the social sciences.

CHAPTER 3

COLONIAL FRONTIER THEORY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSUMPTION OF TERRITORY

The colonial theorization of borders is important not just in its claims to accomplishing a particular kind of rule. Its teleological legitimation of colonial expansion, as Ian Barrow (1994) observes, has been adopted in much of the writing on territory in colonial India. The view, for example, of the creation and incorporation of buffer zones to protect an imperial core has been used as to explain and rationalize imperial expansion in the face of anti-expansionist sentiments in British parliament. In one articulation of this view, Galbraith argues that imperial expansion was primarily a policy of absorbing unruly frontier conflict zones to bring them under the power of centralized colonial authority.

> The conflict between the stated policy of non-expansion and the fact of expansion cannot be understood in terms of insincerity, for aversion to territorial acquisition was undoubtedly genuine. Part of the explanation lies in the pull exerted by "turbulent frontiers" adjacent to the area of Imperial authority and in the wide powers exercised by Imperial viceroys in the era of primitive communications (1960, 151).

The expansion of British power in India is glossed as a movement to contain troublesome populations at the frontier by bringing them within the official purview of the colonial state. Expansion is logically checked only when state territory runs up against another expanding colonial power (Russia), too powerful or large to be brought within territorial boundaries. Similarly, the view of the Himalayas as the natural boundaries of India has been adopted to explain the rapid British expansion North through the Sub-continent.

As Ainslie T. Embree, for example, writes, "The movement [by the East India Company] up the Gangetic plains to Punjab, and then to the mountain ranges beyond the Indus, and, in the northeast, towards Tibet and Burma, can be seen as a search for a permanent and viable frontier" (1977, 269). In this frame, expansion towards the Himalayas is seen as a historical inevitability and the mountains of the North-West frontier are cast as the natural arenas for defining the boundaries of an emergent state.

The colonial theory of frontiers articulated by Curzon and his contemporaries should not, however, be seen exclusively within the context of the North-West Frontier. Indeed, colonial expansion in the later half of the 19th was a complex and shifting terrain of alliances, partnerships, and colonial projects seeking to annex, gain control of, and divide the colonial territories in Africa, Latin and South America, and Asia.[22] In this context, Curzon locates frontiers as a particularly Imperial problem of rule, indeed as *the* modern problem of colonial expansion. Frontiers are the ultimate political instruments used to negotiate the relationship between expanding great powers, the means of ensuring the safe and ultimate parceling of the world amongst competing empires. Yet frontiers mark not only the external boundaries of state expansion, they also define boundaries of state power. As Goswami argues, the transition from East India Company to Crown rule following the uprisings of 1857, heralded a territorial consolidation of colonial power.

> The progressive territorial "encaging" of social relations with a geographically delimited state structure was effected in and through a myriad of practices. These included the constitution and regulation of a centralized monetary system; the institution of a massive infrastructural web of railways and communication technologies; the classification and hierarchical ordering of administrative-territorial units; the development of census and survey agencies that systematically surveyed, mapped and measured both land and people; the production of built environments and architectural forms that made visible the presense of the colonial state; and complex bureaucracies oriented towards the collection and assessment of land revenue. Territorial consolidation involved

[22] For an outstanding documentary collection of this division, see Carter and Harlow 2003a and 2003b.

> the monopolization of power of rule by a single, central authority and the creation of an externally bounded economic, juridical, and political space. The deepening of the structural powers of the state was integrally linked to broader shifts in global, imperial economy. There were determinate links between the post-1858 restructuring of the colonial state and the accelerated integration of colonial South Asia into the world economy dominated by metropolitan British capital (Goswami 1998, 612).

Against this backdrop, the production of a frontier and, indeed, Curzon's argument in general should be seen within a broader context that looks beyond the perceived threat to the North. The project of defining and delimiting a territorial boundary along India's North-West frontier can be read in the context of other imperial projects of carving out a distinct and territorially bounded series of colonial states.

Curzon's analysis is not so much a call or even an opening salvo in the development of an academic discourse that takes frontiers and territory seriously, but rather as an argument that specifically posits a particular, historically contextual theory of territory that naturalizes and legitimizes colonial visions of expansion and rule. Curzon's three tiered notion of frontier stability that sees boundaries as simultaneously natural, scientific, and political posits a notion of territory as technically delimited along geographically logical terrain secured by political negotiations between buffer states and expanding great powers. This argument, I suggest, presents a teleological notion of territory that views the formation of frontiers and borders as inevitable, naturalizing the production of space and obscuring the complex processes of domination and regulation that are central to the making of the colonial frontier.

Such an argument is particularly significant in the context of the development and adoption of notions of territory into social science imagination at the turn of the century. At the time of Curzon's lecture, political theory largely centered on critiques of the obligations, rights, and limitations of the liberal state (Held 1983). Territory was conceptualized in relationship to shifting forms of sovereignty and relations between

government and population associated with the rise of modern state power (Foucault 2000). As Agnew and Corbridge argue, this conceptualization of the state relied on a particular notion of a common and homogenous juridical space based on legal and administrative state authority. Territory entered political theory largely as an abstract notion of demarcated space within which the state could exercise sovereign power. Thus, in Hegel, for example, individuals became agents through the legal definition and enforcement of private property rights (Agnew and Corbridge 1995) while in Hobbes, contract theory is the constitutive element in forging a relationship between rulers and subjects as well as the formulation of general principles of public law (Foucault 2000). Territory does not overtly enter into a theorization of relations of rule yet is implicit in both of these perspectives. "Only within the homogeneous territorial space of the modern state could the self-conscious subject of modern history emerge" (Agnew and Corbridge 1995, 85).

The adoption of territory as an analytic within explanatory theories of the state is linked to the turn of the century emergence of the discipline of sociology in the work of Durkheim and Weber.[23] As Agnew and Corbridge observe, territory within the work of Durkheim largely can be understood within the frame of the territorial state as a container of society.[24] "The state guaranteed social order. But as a 'container' it also provided a territorial unit for the collection of the statistics about social and economic

[23] Land, and to a lesser extent, territory also play a role in Marx's writings. But see Coronil (1997) for a discussion of Marx's subjugation/feminization of land (*Madame la Terre)* in relation to capital (*Monsieur le Capitale)*. Here, the control and pacification of space might be productively linked to other forms of gendered control and regulation. On this point, see Massey's discussion of the feminization of space in the space/time binary and its consequences for the production of history.
[24] Agnew and Corbridge also argue that Weber's definition of the modern state should be understood similarly, taking territory as an unproblematic category of container of society. While agreeing that territory is viewed as unproblematic by Weber, I wish to preserve Weber's understanding of territory in relation to violence and legitimation. The presence of violence as an analytic in Weber distinguishes his views of territory from Durkheim's in important ways.

processes that empirical social science required" (Agnew and Corbridge 1995).[25] It is in Weber's classic definition of the state that the term "territory" acquires a specific analytic importance. Developed within a similar context and timeframe as Curzon's argument—the simultaneous partitioning of colonial space along lines of imperial conflict and expansion and the territorial consolidation of power in colonial space in the late 19th/early 20th century—Weber offers a definition that explicitly defines a relationship between state and space.[26] While other classical views understand territory in the context of sovereignty, the dialectic of domestic/foreign, or simplified notions of territory as a container for society, Weber centralizes territory as one of three primary components of the analysis of state power. In Weber's 1918 lecture "Politics as a Vocation," he famously writes:

> Today… we have to say that the state is a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory. Note that 'territory' is one of the characteristics of the state. Specifically, at the present time, the right to use physical force is ascribed to other institutions or to individuals only to the extent to which the state permits it. The state is considered the sole source of the 'right' to use violence. Hence, 'politics' for us means striving to share power or striving to influence the distribution of power, either among states or among groups within a state (italics in original, Weber 1948, 78).[27]

Weber's link of territory to violence and legitimacy is a departure from liberal and

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[25] As many authors have argued, these statistics themselves, administered through social sciences, constituted technologies of rule and, as such, were critical components of state formation (c.f. Corrigan and Sayer 1985, Mitchell 2002).

[26] As Connell (1997) notes, territorial expansion, and in particular, Prussian expansion, provided a context for much of Weber's early work.

[27] This definition is reiterated in *Economy and Society* as "A 'ruling organization' will be called 'political' insofar is its existence and order is continuously safeguarded within a given *territorial* are by the threat and application of physical force on the part of the administrative staff. A compulsory political organization with continuous operations (*politischer Anstaltbetreib*) will be called a 'state' insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the *monopoly* of *legitimate* use of physical force in the enforcement of its order" (1978, 54). Notice, here that while territory appears as critical (italicized) in the first part of Weber's definition, it appears to drop out of the second. Thus, territory remains "given." It is an important, yet unproblematic component of Weber's understanding of states and politics.

liberal democratic political theory/philosophy. Here territory emerges as a component of statecraft through the focus on territorial distribution of domination, "a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e., considered to be legitimate) violence" (78). The state is conceptualized as an explicitly territorial entity, with territory as the contested boundaries of its violent power. The ability of the state to exercise legitimate violence within a given space is accompanied by the implicit corollary that the exercise of such violence is spatially bounded. Here, rather than conceptualized as an external relationship between states/empires regulating territorial expansion, borders are seen as the limits of the state's legitimate right to dominate populations and bring them under the sway of bureaucratic power.

While territory here emerges as an important feature of the state, Weber's attention to territory is also limited. As the italics in his definition emphasize, the focus of critique is placed upon the terms "legitimate" and "violence." These terms constitute the substantive content of Weber's ideal typical definition: the subject of a political sociology of the state. Territory is a backdrop, the space upon within which the relationship between ideal type and empirical evidence can be measured. As in Marx's *Madame la Terre* and *Monsieur le Capitale* (Coronil 1997), territory emerges in Weber as the unproblematic component of his explanatory critique. Territory is "given" and simply marks separate state spaces. This view obscures important questions about the relationship between states and "their" territories. As Brendan O'Leary has recently put it, "But surely territories are not given? Surely they are made, and re-made? Surely they are, in our contemporary parlance, variables, rather than constants?" (O'Leary 2001, 5). Territory is not simply the stage on which state formation takes place, it is a critical and material part of the drama itself. While Weber critically highlights the dynamics of internal regulation, he adopts the analytic

pacification and smoothing of territory implicit in the concept of colonial state space.[28]

Despite its limitations, Weber's definition has become a central trope in social science analyses of the state, particularly those concerned with the dynamic of territory (Brenner *et al* 2003). In particular, it has served as a central analytic in comparative historical sociologies seeking to understand "states as organizational structures or as potentially autonomous actors" (Evans *et al.* 1985. vii). In this view, Weber's ideal typical definition becomes a way to emphasize the individual problematics of particular states and their relation with other states within the state system. Territory is the ground on which the state sits, the particular "block" of land which abuts against, delimits, and defines an individual state in relation to its allies, partners, and competitors within the international state system. Yet again, in this formulation, territory is allotted an important yet under-theorized place in analysis. Territory appears as a marker of difference, suggesting that the geography (e.g., access to natural resources, maritime and over-land trade routes, location in relation to other states, etc.) of a particular state space is determinant in its position within the broader state-system, which both determines and is further determined by its particular relationship to violence, legitimation, and interstate commerce and politics. Again, territory appears as a stage on which history is carried out, rather than the product of competing and contingent interests, multiple and overlapping connections to other "spaces," and complex conflicts and negotiations to transform space into "place" (Massey 1994).[29]

This adoption, I suggest becomes important if we can read Curzon's logic in

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[28] My argument parallel's Doreen Massey's observation that within the social sciences, space has been conceived as passive while time (history) is active, or the source of change. Like Massey, my goal is not to reverse this position, but to try to think space and time within the same analytic frame without subordinating one to the other.

[29] The Weberian conception of the territorial state is central to a broader group of projects than those seeking to "bring the state back in." See Cons, Feldman, and Geisler (forthcoming) for a critique of the centrality of this logic in projects relying on analytics of territorialization and deterritorialization.

Weber's acknowledgement, but failure to problematize, notions of territory. I don't wish to make an argument here that Weber's definition of states is an adoption or critical re-reading of Curzon's concepts. Indeed, Weber's ideal typical notion of the state was explicitly based on European state formation. As numerous authors have argued (c.f., Mignolo 2000), Weber's construction overtly avoids consideration of colonial space either in-and-of itself, or as a constitutive element in state formation in Europe. While there is no evidence to suggest that Weber was aware of Curzon's lecture or debates around the North-West Frontier. I suggest that his epistemic frame can be historicized in relation to particular kinds of late colonial claims about space: claims that smooth over particular practices in the production of frontiers while valorizing others.[30] My suggestion is that a discussion of the colonial production of space and the imagination of emergent colonial states (c.f. Mitchell 2000 and 20002) needs to be included in Weberian arguments about the history of European state formation (c.f. various essays in Tilly 1975, Tilly 2004). As Mitchell (2002) argues, the imagination of colonial space as a series of "economies" that could be abstracted and compared to one another (in a not dissimilar fashion to the way that ideal types can be used to compare states) required the production of particular notions of state rule. One of these was the territorial bounding of space, a distinct region that could be both imagined and defined as British India. I further suggest that these spatial imaginings—the notion of a colonial state space—be seen as part of the historical context within which Weber articulated his theory of states as a series of territorial blocks, each governed by an entity called the state which claims legitimate monopoly on violence within that territory. Indeed, my interest is not to discard Weber's classic

[30] Though in this thesis I look specifically at frontiers, my argument need not be confined to borderlands. Indeed, I would argue, drawing on the growing literature on territoriality (c.f., Vandergeest and Peluso 1995) and marginality (various essays in Das and Poole 2004b) that state space needs to be thought of as just as problematic at "centers" as at "frontiers."

definition. As I hope the following chapters will show, an understanding of struggles over legitimation and the monopoly on violence were central problematics in claims to colonial territory. Rather, I wish to add a different view of territory to Weber's definition, both as a way to problematize colonial state space and to show the intimate links between processes of territory, violence, and legitmation.

Curzon's theory naturalizes frontiers as "tools of peace" rendering the process of making territory at the frontier, deeply problematic at the time, unimportant or secondary considerations in the project of demarcating "British" territory. The notion of a colonial state space, an easily recognized and marked inside and outside of state control, should be recognized as part of the official narrative of colonial rule. The simple marking and definition of space in and of itself is constitutive of territory. As Das and Poole put it, "Legitimacy… emerged as a function of this boundary-making effect of state practice" (2004a, 6). In this sense, Weberian critiques of the state might be said to adopt the "official story" as a critical, interpretive tool within social science inquiry.

What I'd like to highlight in drawing together Curzon and Weber is the genesis of an idea of a colonial state space. The idea of a simplified notion of state space, where territory is simply demarcated by borders and boundaries and, subsequently, seen as uniform within those boundaries,[31] is part and parcel of both the colonial theory of frontiers and of Weber's territorial state. This concept tends to radically reduce our language for talking about space, imagining an abstract notion of states as acting on a place from a perceived analytic distance (Cons, Feldman, and Geisler *forthcoming*). The concept of state space is thus theoretically limiting. Within these frames, spaces are either under the purview of state power (i.e are "state" space) or are

[31] In some ways, the notion of spheres of control and spheres of influence implicit in colonial frontier theory offer more nuance than Weber's uniform conception of terrirtory.

seen outside of and in opposition to such space (c.f. Scott 1998). At the same time, states are imagined as abstract entities, working on places from an analytic distance to bring them within the fold of bureaucratic power (c.f., Debrix 1998). As such, while this literature expands our understandings of the processes involved in producing and regulating state space (Lefebvre 1991), it elides how states are formed through complex negotiations over the meaning of territory and of belonging carried out in particular places (Massey 1994).

More to the point however, the language of state spaces, produced in colonial frontier theory and adopted into the social sciences through Weber, is more than simply an analytically weak concept. As Goswami argues:

> Committed to spreading its authority evenly throughout the territory, to filling up the geographic space of colonial India with its authoritative presence, the post-1857 colonial regime made territorially comprehensive claims to rule. Territorial consolidation involved the attempted monopolization of regulatory powers by an increasingly centralized apparatus, the development of an elaborate, hierarchical bureaucracy that surveyed, mapped, and measured both land and people, the deepening and widening of the administrative and military reach of the state, and a determined reinvestment in epistemic modalities of rule (2004, 31).

If we accept Goswami's observation that the production of colonial space was a profoundly uneven process and that the territorial expansion of rule in post-1857 India was a *claim* to comprehensive rule rather than the realization of it, we must not start from a theoretical position that assumes an *a prioiri* presence or absence of state power. Rather, that presence and the claim to that presence must be the subject of critique. I explore this problem in the context of cartography and the North-West Frontier in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

EXPLORING THE RECONAISSANCE ZONE

I would like to begin questioning imperial claims about territory as colonial state space by looking specifically at the discourse of precision so critical to the colonial theory of frontiers. I will do this by examining cartography, one of the practices that Curzon identifies as "central" to producing colonial state space. I recognize that doing this at the expense of attending to other competing and synergistic discourses, such as ethnology, risks eliding the complexity of the ways territorial claims are made and also tells an incomplete story about the suite of practices employed by colonial officials in an attempt to accomplish rule. Cartography does, however, provide a direct window onto the imperial conceptualization of territory and the space that is "claimed" as under imperial rule. While an exploration of competing discourses might begin to show the rationalization of liberal imperial projects (Mehta 1999) or the specific practices of disciplining colonial subjects (Mitchell 1991), cartography helps to show the marking of place as a particular kind of space. My interest in looking at maps, then, is to better understand and problematize the "claims" to colonial space. Maps, and particularly the maps examined in this chapter, mark state space. In stark terms, it declares what is inside and outside of particular jurisdictions, zones, and states. What I hope to show through an examination of Survey of India documents, however, is that while, on the face of things, cartography offers an unambiguous picture of rule, comparative examination can show these to be claims that are both contingent and contested. Maps of British India are statements about rule, statements that can be unpacked and shown as part of a discourse of rule, but also as claims to having accomplished that rule (Corrigan and

Sayer 1985, Abrams 1988). As I will try to show in this chapter, they can also be used to problematize these claims.

The frontier/border, as the limits of the emergent colonial state space, is a particularly important place to begin this investigation, not simply because it is the subject of Curzon's and others' theorization, but also because it is a place where the claims of control represented by maps are particularly tenuous. I do not wish to make a claim that the picture represented in maps is any more "real" in non-frontier zones. Indeed, the friction between colonial partitionings of space through a range of territorializing practices and the people and places that are the subject of these territorializations (Vandergeest and Peluso1995) has been suggestively demonstrated by a growing number of authors.[32] Rather, my argument, which adds to this literature, looks at the North-West frontier as one place where the claim to a colonial state space is particularly thin at the same time that the claim to having accomplished a particular kind of rule is particularly urgent.

My interest in unpacking cartography is not simply confined to its importance in the project of defining the frontier. Indeed, the literature on cartography, I would suggest, is one academic discourse where the concepts of state and non-state space have been too easily adopted and assumed. While a new and exciting literature on cartography has provided a plethora of ways to "deconstruct the map" (Harley 2001), this literature still tends to reduce cartography to two problematics. The first views maps as central to the construction of territorial nationalism, making it possible to envision the nations "geo-body (Thongchai 1997, Trivedi 2003, Ramaswamy 2002). This literature identifies maps as productive documents in structuring national

[32] Researchers interested in space from a political ecology perspective have convincingly explored this problem in the context of parks, forests, and other zones of colonial spatial regulation (c.f., Sivaramakrishnan 1999, Rangarajan 1996, Guha and Gadgil 1989, Neumann 1998). For a more detailed discussion of this literature in relation to maps, see Cons 2005.

consionsness. As Thongchai states, "the map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purports to represent" (Thongchai quoted in Anderson 1991 [1983], 174). Maps are seen as tools through which the nation is discursively constructed: a visual language "locating places within and outside the nation" (Trivedi 2003, 15) that present "powerful stories about the past and the present, replete with their own ideological presuppositions" (Craib, 2002, 66).

A second branch of this literature focuses more directly on the role that maps play in statecraft. Drawing on J.B. Harley's project of bringing post structural theory to bear on cartographic analysis and history, this literature understands maps as technologies of power and as part of a particularly modern set of practices of rule.[33] It's worth taking a moment to examine one of these texts, Mathew Edney's exhaustive *Mapping an Empire*, in a bit more detail both because it is a seminal text in South Asian cartographic history and in cartographic history more generally, and because it illustrates some of the assumptions this essay tries to work against.

Edney's project traces the rise of cartographic discourse in South Asia from the early colonial period through 1843, shortly before the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. Edney, following Christopher Bayly's work on British information networks (1993, 1997) argues that cartography was the principle means through which the British came to "know the country" (Bayly 1993) they ruled. As he further argues, this was an imperfect rule.

> [This] is a study of how the British represented their India. I say "their India" because they did not map the "real India. They mapped the India that they perceived and that they governed. To the extent that many aspects of India's societies and cultures remained beyond British experience and to the extent that Indians resisted and negotiated with the British, India could never be entirely and perfectly known. The British deluded themselves that their science enabled them to know the "real" India" (1997, 2-3).

[33] For suggestive discussions of cartography and the emergence of European states, see Buisseret 1992 and Biggs 1999.

Edney argues that the rise of the Survey of India and its projects to comprehensively map India must be understood within an Enlightenment epistemology that equated rule with precision. Moving from James Rennel's early maps of Bengal through the rise of the so-called "Great Trigonometrical Survey of India," Edney argues that the Survey of India tried to create a geographic archive with seemingly panoptic power: a set of maps that would allow them to rule India with knowledge and precision. As such, "the rational uniform space of the British maps of India was not a neutral value-free space. Rather, it was a space imbued with power relations, with the fact that the British controlled (or had the power to control) the lands depicted and that they could impose India-wide legislation and reforms in a manner impossible for earlier rulers" (333). Edney stresses that this cartographic panopticon was always both imperfect and representing a particular imperial view of space. Yet his notion of the simultaneous success and failure of the project of surveying seems to hinge primarily on its inability to achieve the degree of precision that it claimed as an ideal. The mapping of British India, is thus seen as an imperfect project of rule because it simultaneously presented a rationalized understanding of landscape to British officials that couldn't completely reflect local knowledge and could not in practice meet the scientific standards to which it aspired.

Edney's argument, I would suggest, takes the claims of maps largely at face value. In his argument that cartography was *the* discourse of empire, that "empire exists because it can be mapped [and that] the meaning of empire was inscribed in every map," (2) sees maps as straightforward signs of rule. Edney assumes mapped space to be synonymous with state space, an assumption that smoothes the unevenness inherent in projects of claiming territory. While rule within this space, as Edney points out, is always imperfect, the map, and the process of mapping, represent the

construction of a (particular) panoptic rule. Attention to precision, however, already affords a particular kind of immanent power to maps themselves. It analyzes them, in other words, within the same basic epistemological frame that Edney correctly points out that the maps themselves, and those that make and use them, rely on. It misses the power imbued in the very act of representation within a discourse of precision. As Timothy Mitchell points out, in relation to map makers, "They are often very careful and precise, and they always stress the accuracy of their work. But we should not be misled by their claims into thinking that the novelty and usefulness of this knowledge lay in its accuracy" (2002, 114). Rather, mapping, as Mitchell points out, is a process of simultaneously regulating the landscape and reformatting social relations. I also suggest that it is a process making a claim about a particular kind of uniform rule, an argument for a particular view of landscape which may or may not, in practice, relate to what is going on in the zones that are mapped. As I have argued elsewhere (Cons 2005), if we understand maps as claims rather than evidence of the accomplishment of particular kind of state space (synonymous with rule), we can begin to see what these claims mask and where they begin to break down. Modifying Stoler's (1995a) suggestive phrase, we can begin the process of seeing the constitution of territory from the bottom up by reading official maps upside down.[34]

I will begin this discussion by looking at a map titled "The Indian Empire" (Figure 2) from *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* in 1909, published two years after Curzon's lecture. *The Gazetteer* provided general descriptive information about the expanding British empire on the subcontinent, offering a comprehensive region by region description (including detailed maps based on Survey of India data). The Gazetteer provides historical, geographical, statistical, demographic and revenue

[34] Indeed, as I suggest in Cons 2005, this process is most effective when competing claims can be shown on competing maps.

information by both province and village and, as such, offers the "official" and public narrative of Imperial India. "The Indian Empire" represents the formal and legal boundaries of India. The map, which appeared on the inside cover of each volume of *The Gazetteer* shows India painted in bright yellows (lighter areas) and reds (darker areas), the former signifying the indirectly ruled princely states and the later zones under direct colonial administration. Nepal and Bhutan appear in green (in the originals). Though it is unclear as to why the two independent states are distinguished from the rest of the zones surrounding the subcontinent, a suggestive note in the legend states "Native states and territories colored yellow and green."[35] The areas surrounding the Indian borders are presented in dull earth tones. This map offers an unproblematic picture of British Empire, complete with neatly defined borders of rule. It is interesting to note here that while Nepal and Bhutan are worthy of a green coloration, Afghanistan, Curzon's critical imperial buffer state, remains unproblematically beige.[36] What this map suggests is that the colonial state space of India has been neatly cordoned off. It is surrounded on its outskirts by vast and only topographically differentiated spaces that have little bearing on its internal affairs.

While this map, the public statement of imperial space, appears to neatly demarcate the boundaries of empire,[37] the uniformity of this space can be problematized when contrasted with the practice of the Survey of India in the periods leading up Curzon's lecture. I will contrast this map with several from the Survey of

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[35] This is particularly suggestive as Nepal and Bhutan were nominally independent and not part of the system of princely states. There is an interesting double suggestion here, that simultaneously distances British imperial power from processes of indirect rule, painting the princely states as collaborators with, rather than tributaries to, British colonial rule. At the same time, Nepal and Bhutan here are highlighted as related to, though different from, British India, not as threats, but rather as extensions, zones of potential colonial space.

[36] This seemingly downplays the importance of Afghanistan in arguments about imperial defense. This may be a sign of the continually contentious place of Arghanistan within debates over Empire in England (Mahajan 2002). Afghanistan, like Nepal and Bhutan, was not a princely state.

[37] Indeed this narrative is born out throughout the 25 volumes of *The Gazetteer* by the individual area maps, which present a more detailed, but equally unproblematic view of the space demarcated as British India.

India's *Annual General Reports*. The *General Reports* are not private or secret documents, but neither are they public in the same way that *The Gazetteer* is. Intended primarily for bureaucratic use by employees of the Survey, administrative officials in both India and London tracking the Survey's progress, and cabinets holding the Survey's purse strings, the *General Reports* provide data on the Survey of India's progress on a district by district scale. The *General Rep*orts also provide several broad maps that serve as indexes tracking the progress of the Survey in creating topographical and revenue maps in a given area. It is these that I'd like to begin to examine.

As Edney has argued, the major project of the Survey of India in the 19th century was to implement the "Great Trigonmetric Survey," a scientific mapping project that would serve to fix the imperial vision of space. The trigonometric survey was a cartographic panacea, or, as Edney puts it, an "archival structure to which all data could be fitted, by which any inaccuracies could be cured, or fixed like a dog, to stop them from propagating" (289). The Trigonometrical Survey, then, provided an epistemological grounding for a great, and precise, land-map of India: an exact, precise, and measurable space that could be governed from within an Enlightenment episteme that fused nominal accuracy, rule, and legitimation. As Barrow puts it, "[The] trigonmetrical survey… had the mantle of science. It was explanatory (using data as a basis for determining the shape of the earth), instrumental (employing extraordinarily valuable instruments in order to further the interests of a disninterested science), and universalizing (requiring all other surveys to rely upon its results for their success)" (2003, 83). Trigonometric surveying provided a totalizing scientific approach to colonial space that promised to fuse the processes of topographical and revenue surveying, "encouraging the thought that the British could rule India (the land and the people) with the same order and control that they exercised over the map"

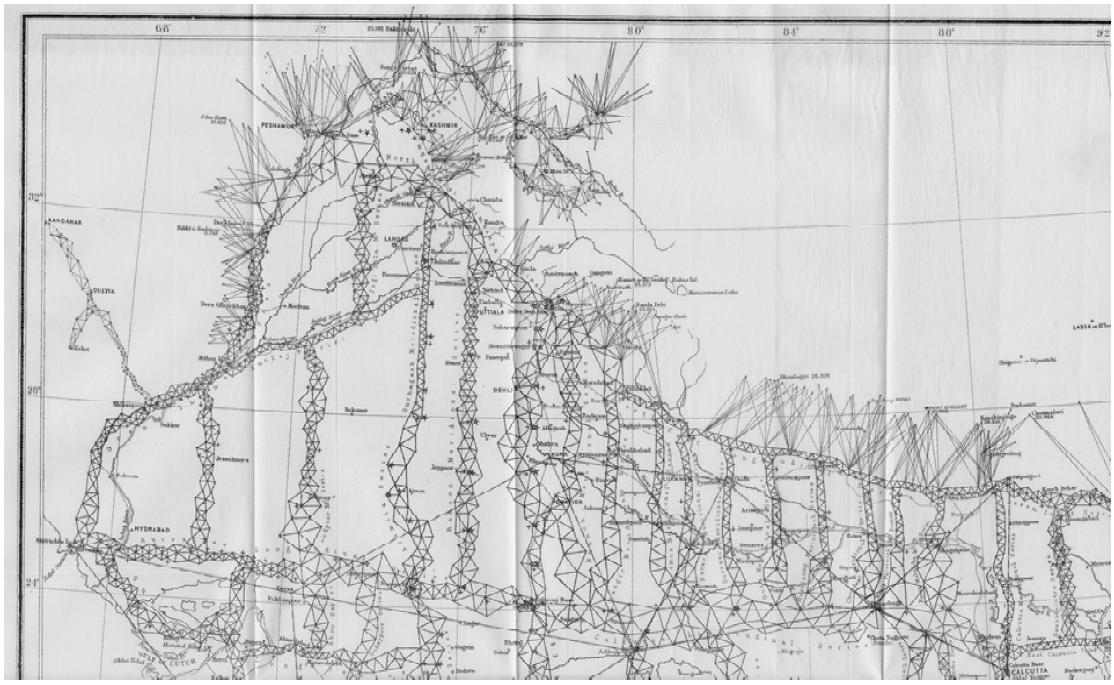

Figure 3: General Progress of the Great Trigonometrical Survey, 1881-2. Detail

(Barrow 2003, 18).[38] The Trigonometrical Survey, then, subdivided India into a series of triangles that could be intimately and precisely known. The spread of triangles over the subcontinent was seen as a measure of the Survey's achievement of its scientific rational ideal. This scientific ideal can be thought of as corresponds, in part, to Curzon's claim that precision and geographic knowledge are prime in establishing the boundaries of Empire. Yet the general progress reports suggest something altogether different. Figure 3 maps the progress of the Great Triginometric Survey through the 1881-2 surveying season. While this map shows much of the country subdivided into regular triangles, the picture along the frontier is somewhat different. A series of

[38] The process of conducting a trigonometric survey is described in detail in Endey 1997. In brief, the process involves the imagination of a series of straight lines connecting the tops of hills of trees. The points at either end of these lines are selected such that a chain or network of triangles spreads out over the landscape. The surveyor then measures the anterior angles of the triangles. "The actual size of the triangles is determined by the very careful measurement on the ground of the length of one side of a triangle; the length of all other triangle sides are calculated from this one "baseline" by means of trigonometry. The later Enlightenment term for a triangulation was therefore a *trigonometrical survey*. The result is a rigorous mathematical framework in which all points are defined with respect to each other" (Edney 1997, 19). Once the dimensions of the triangle have been measured, technically precise surveying can be carried out inside of the triangle.

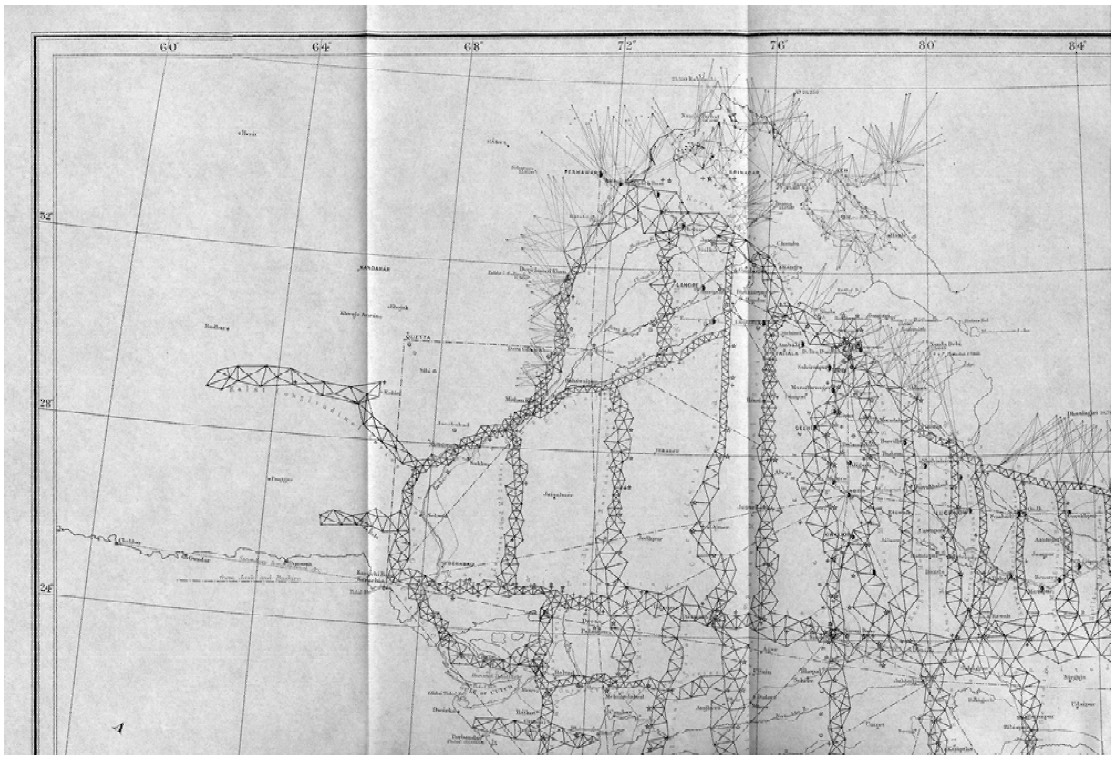

Figure 4: General Progress of the Great Trigonometrical Survey, 1907-7, Detail

elongated lines blanket the frontier and run from the Kashmir and Gilgit area down along the border to Nepal and all the way out into Sikkim. While there is no indication within the reports on what this seemingly different procedure might mean, the lines seem to indicate that while the rest of India is being slowly and "precisely" mapped, the trigonometric means of "knowing the country" is much less developed along thefrontier. There are practical reasons explaining why this may be the case. In particular, the mountainous frontier region poses particularly difficult terrain for trigonometric surveying, and requires the transportation of expensive and heavy equipment.

The 1881-2 report is suggestive, however, when compared with the 1906-7 report (Figure 4), the General Report from the year of Curzon's lecture. In the subsequent 25 years, though there seems to have been considerable progress in the trigonometrical survey throughout the body of India, there is no change at all along the

frontier.[39] Indeed, as the map legend states, all of the light lines along the frontier date from earlier than 1830, the early years of triangulation. As such, if trigonometric surveying epitomizes of accuracy—the height of enlightenment epistemology that saw rule as synonymous with numeric precision (c.f., Cohn 1987, Ludden 1993)—then Curzon's claims that the process of building frontiers was based on accuracy and knowledge appear questionable.

The lack of trigonometric surveying on the North-West Frontier does not, of course, in-and-of itself, undermine either the claims of *The Imperial Gazetteer* or of Curzon. Barrow (2003) argues that the Trans-Himalayan survey, carried out to the North and West of India's North-West Frontier, intentionally moved away from the highly technical process of triangulation and focused instead on the public romance of mountain surveying as a kind of imperial public relations project. Barrow suggests that the Trans-Himalayan survey became a kind or rallying point for perceptions of empire at home and that the Survey of India transformed its survey activities, in this sense, into a kind of public secret. The difficult and romantic terrain contribute to the broader romance of the Great Game, as famously captured in Kipling's *Kim*. The Survey, Barrow argues, took a hand in constructing this romance by reverting to more "primitive" and less technical survey techniques (root surveys as opposed to triangulation) and, subsequently, disseminating the narrative reports from such surveys to the public as adventure narratives. Further, the Trans-Himalayan survey became a site where liberal ideologies of empire could be put into practice by employing "native" surveyors, the "pundits" so famously captured by Kipling in the character of Huree Babu (Barrow 2003, c.f. Raj 2002 & 2003, Piper 2002). Barrow argues for a reconfiguration of thought on the Great Game, seeing the Trans-

[39] The exception to this is the Kalat longitudinal series which sends a swath of triangles into Baluchistan.

Hinalayan Survey

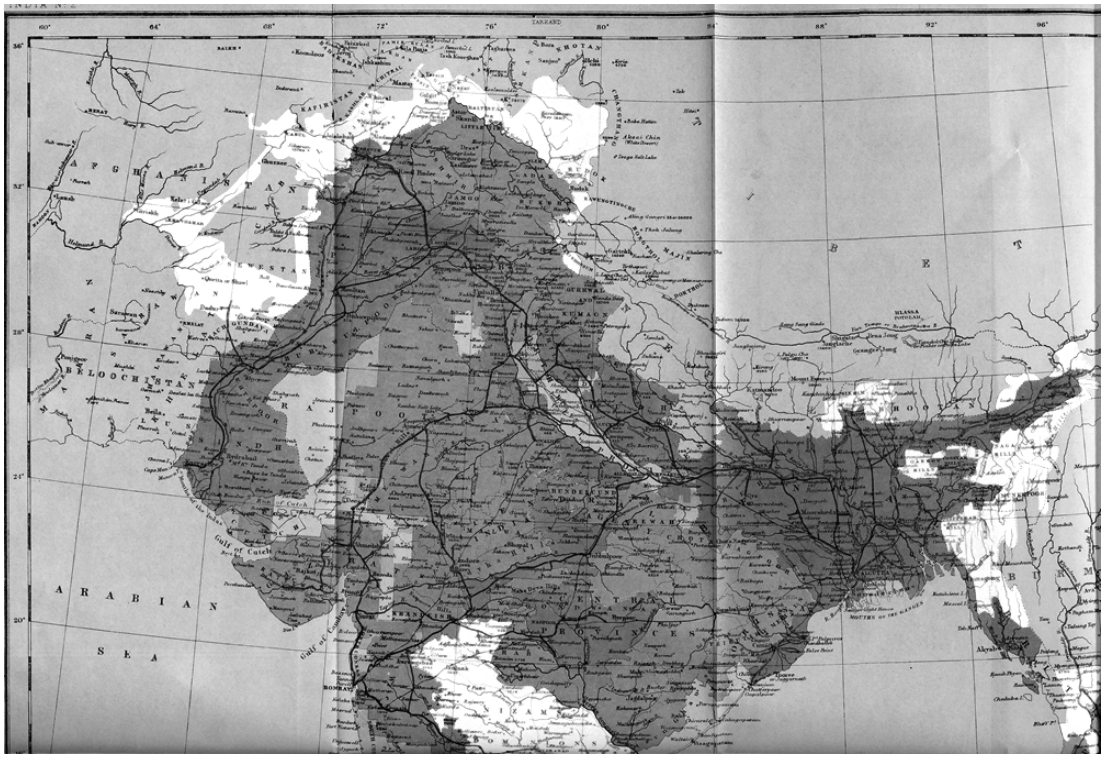

Figure 5: General Progress of Survey of India, 1881-82, Detail

as a site for articulating a particular kind of public imperial vision of expansion as both benevolent liberal project and fierce, manly adventure.

> The Survey of India's choice of using old-fashioned techniques and stereotyped Indian agents to raise its visibility in Britain may, therefore, be placed within a sociological and political context that existed in both Britain and India. In both countries, medievalism and orientalism were linked to the new imperialist ideology in such a way that both pride in Britain and a sense of superiority were generated through the possession of Empire (2003,129).

Yet while Empire certainly provided a context for the explorations of the Trans-Himalayan Survey, it is important to note that the Survey mapped *potential* imperial space, not imperial space itself. The Trans-Himalayan survey at the turn of the century was largely concerned with mapping areas just to the North of the "official" border. It provided information about zones critical for the strategic defense of India, but not

specifically zones that were (at the time) within the boundaries of imperial rule. It should not, as such, be confused with the North-West Frontier to the South, officially within the bounds of British India.

The lack of trigonometric surveying in frontier regions does not mean that other forms of surveying were not being employed, only that the particular rhetoric of scientific mapping cannot be applied within India's turn of the century frontier zone. However, when compared with this second set of maps of the area, a different picture begins to emerge. These maps, also from the General Reports track the general progress of the imperial surveys, providing quick reference to the status of the general survey in any given region. The first (Figure 5), also from the 1881-2 General Report, shows the status of topographical and revenue surveying throughout India. The lighter dark grey areas represent space where topographical surveys, have been or are in the process of being completed. Darker dark grey marks areas where revenue surveys, carried out based on completed topographical surveys have been completed or are in progress. Light areas, however, denote areas simply listed as "topographical reconnaissance surveys of various scales." These areas largely blanket India's Northern frontier.[40] No additional information is provided on what these reconnaissance surveys are. On the surface reconnaissance surveying might simply suggest preliminary surveys laying the groundwork for more technically "precise" surveys to come. Alternately, they might suggest the difficulty of terrain in these areas necessitating the adoption of multiple and different survey techniques. What is suggestive, however, is that while the general reports provide detailed accounts of each individual sub-district within the Survey's purview (narrative reports on progress

[40] Curiously, the only non-frontier region that appears to be under Reconnaissance surveying is the princely state of Hyrderabad.

and difficulties encountered during the surveying season), organized by survey type, information about areas under "reconnaissance survey" are omitted from the reports.

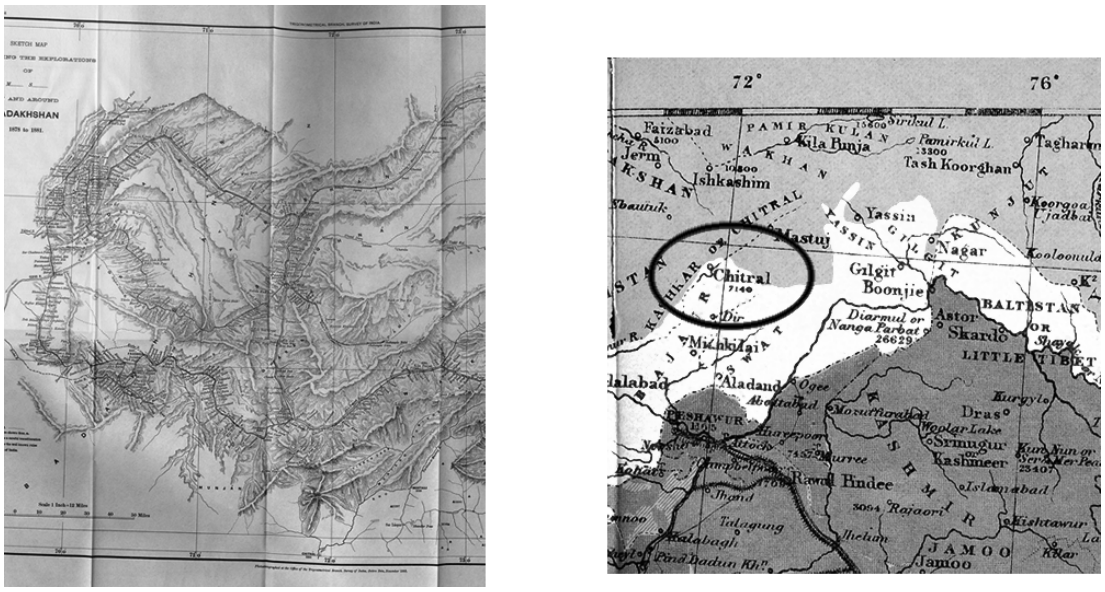

Figure 6: Badakhshan and Detail from the General Report of the Survey of India, 1881-82

Indeed, more than simply being excluded from descriptions, areas under "reconnaissance surveying" appear to be, quite literally, off the map. While the General Reports contain series of maps demonstrating in detail the status of survey in general areas, publishing of sheets based on surveys, and routes of surveyors, all detail has been carefully omitted from within the reconnaissance zone. One example of this (Figure 6) can be observed in the map from the route survey of Badakhshan (also included in the 1881-82 General Report), part of the Trans-Himalayan survey, and directly to the North of Chitral, which lies in the Reconnaissance zone. Here, while elaborate detail is provided along the entire rout through Badakhshan, this detail abruptly stops at the boundary of the reconnaissance survey area. While much detail can be provided for areas surrounding the reconnaissance survey zone, cartographic information within it is carefully masked.

The corresponding map for the 1906-7 report (Figure 7) shows a near completion of topographical survey throughout British India and a broad expansion (areas in dark grey) of new and more detailed cadastral surveys. Again, the somewhat mysterious term "geographical reconnaissance at various scales" designates the light

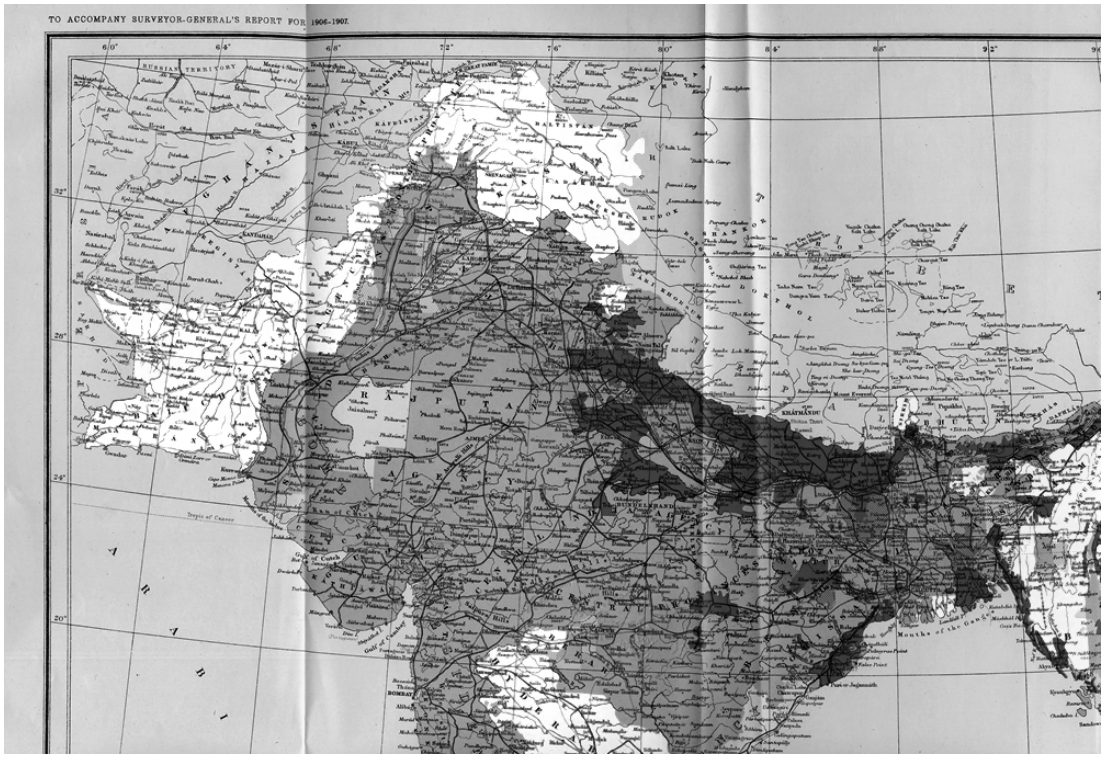

Figure 7: General Progress of the Survey of India, 1906-7, Detail

areas. Similar to the trigonometric survey results, it appears that in the twenty-five intervening years, despite a supposed increase in cartographic information, there is no reduction of the space of the reconnaissance survey.[41] Indeed, the reconnaissance zone appears to have expanded with the extension of the "official" border to include Baltistan to the North and Baluchistan to the West, both areas that had been "officially" incorporated into the fold of colonial space.[42]

[41] Again, the primary difference here is the Kalat Longitudinal Survey extending into Beluchistan. There are corresponding narrative extracts for this arc in the 1907 *Extracts from the Narrative Reports*.
[42] It is interesting to note that by 1922, the data from the Reconnaissance Zones was no longer omitted from the Reports. In that year, the Survey of India published the narrative reports from a 1914 exploration in the Eastern Karakoram and Yarkand Valley. Why there was an eight year delay in publication is not explained in the text.

While the maps are suggestive, they do not, in and of themselves, tell us what Reconnaissance surveying is. Other surveys marked out in *The General Reports* and in the Progress Maps specifically suggest a kind of evolutionary move towards completion (e.g., the country is to be surveyed at smaller scale, topographical surveys give way to revenue surveys, cadastral surveys at a finer grain supercede older less accurate surveys, etc.). Reconnaissance surveying suggests secrecy. The general reports themselves don't give much insight into what, if anything, is different about the process of reconnaissance surveying. However, the areas in which it is being carried out are suggestive. Indeed, India's frontier, and the North-West frontier in particular, appear far from Curzon and Holdich's picture of the precise natural and technical frontier. Indeed, the status of these frontiers, drawing on the limited information in the maps, seems to be somewhat ambiguous. They are simultaneously on and off the map, marked as imperial space, but subject to a very different kind of cartographic regime than the rest of British India.

I suggested at the outset of this chapter that broadening the bounds of conventional mapping literature which sees maps as "panoptic" tools of state was one way to begin problematizing the claims to a colonial state space. I have argued that examining Survey of India progress reports is one way to blur the crisp lines of the official map. Yet what conclusions can be drawn from looking at these maps in-and-of themselves? Indeed, as authors such as Brian Axel (2001, 2002) have shown, in contemporary India, access to maps of border zones is severely restricted to the general public. Is the North-West Frontier, which appears to be simultaneously on and off the map, a similar restricted zone, where geographic information is classified for security purposes? Alternatively, should the survey be read at face value, that the lack of maps in the reports indicates a lack of maps in general? Hunter's comprehensive report on surveys in the North-West Frontier Province in the *Imperial Gazetteer*

suggests calls doubt on the lack of surveying projects in the area.

> In independent territory surveys have until the last two years been possible only when an expedition was in progress. Geographical reconnaissances based on triangulation were carried out in Chitral, Dir, and Swat in 1885, 1892, 1893, 1895, and 1901, and maps on the quarter-inch scale have been prepared. The more important passes in Chitral were again surveyed in 1904-5. A survey of the Khyber and part of Tirah on the one inch scale was carried out in 1878-9, and survey operations in the latter country were extended during 1897-8. The settlement maps of Peshawar were revised in 1890-4; those of Hazara, Kohat, Dera Ismail Khan, and Bannu are either still under revision or have been recently brought up to date. Reconnaissance maps of the Kurram valley on the quarter-inch scale were made in 1978-80, and the valley was again surveyed on the one-inch scale in 1894 and 1898. The cultivated area is now again under survey, in connexion with the settlement operations (Hunter *et al.* Vol. 19, p. 206).[43]

I argue, then, that the Reconnaissance zone might be productively read another way, as a zone that marks a space where ongoing negotiations over territory and access problematize a simplified and naturalized notion of the frontier, as expressed by Curzon. The maps themselves are not adequate to represent these negotiations, even, indeed, if this had been their intent. However, they do help to bring the North-West Frontier into a particular kind of focus, where the claims of the Survey of India maps and, more broadly, the Government of India, can be questioned. In the next chapter, I will explore this question in the context of narratives of British officers who participated in what I hope to show was an ongoing and tenuous negotiation over territory.

[43] Interestingly, Hunter uses the language of "reconnaissance" as well. The term remains vague in the Gazetteer, as in the *General Reports.* No specific definition of the term is given in the comprehensive *Manual of Surveying for India*, published in 1875.

CHAPTER 5

NEGOTIATING COLONIAL STATE SPACE

What I suggest is masked by the vague term "reconnaissance" is a negotiation over territory than cannot be explained by the simple map. Indeed, this negotiation calls the claims made by the map into severe question. While the history of the areas that make up India's North-West Frontier is complex and beyond the scope of this paper to reconstruct in detail, I argue that the North-West Frontier, conceived by Curzon and others as a question of relations with Russian expansion to the North, is better understood as a history of negotiation and state formation centered around the populations characterized as tribes by the British Administration in the latter half of the 19th century.

The limited amount written about the North-West Frontier tends to adopt the perspective of colonial frontier theory, focusing on territorialization and boundary construction and moving from what Dorothy Woodman (1969) argued are a series of "assumed" boundaries to a series of formalized ones. This process was accomplished differently in different regions and the history of the frontier zone of Ladakh is not, for example, easily subsumed within the history of Chitral or Baluchistan.[44] The discourse of colonial state space, however, masks a history that was highly focused on tribal management and violence. The annexation of Punjab in 1849, which effectively brought India into direct contact with Afghanistan, made the question of "managing" tribes—making sure that they allowed British access to and through the areas in their direct control and securing their allegiance against Russian and/or Chinese interests—in the frontier zone particularly urgent (Obharai 1983). Comprising what Obharai has

[44] Indeed as Woodman (1969) and Fisher *et al.(*1963*)* point out, the question of the Ladakhi frontier was constructed not simply in relation to the Russian empire, but also in relation to Chinese interests and control in Tibet.

called “an ethnographic jigsaw of frightening complexity,” the many competing interests, and frequent conflicts, between the tribes and the difficult and relatively unknown geography of the region made the question of management especially challenging. Colonial administrators frequently found themselves embroiled in complex intrigues over rule in regions that they could not, officially, enter without invitation (Hopkirk 1990).

This led to a series of policies for dealing with tribal groups aimed at bringing them within the purview of colonial power. This process involved both the attempted purchasing of many of these groups’ loyalties and the armed suppression of those groups that didn’t conform to British will. As Hunter *et al.* document in the *Gazetteer*, between 1849, the year the frontier came under nominal British control and 1902, no fewer than 55 expeditions were carried out against various “frontier tribes” (See Appendix A for the exact figures). As Hunter has it, “the operations were simply of importance as being measures required for the establishment of a strong rule and a peaceful border, in countries which had never before known law and order” (155). During these expeditions, by Hunter’s accounts, the British sustained almost 4,200 casualties and employed, cumulatively almost 260,000 troops.[45] Even with such frequent expeditions, however, control of many of the most sensitive areas, such as Chitral, was tenuous at best and areas passed in and out of direct rule by British authority.

The policy of tribal management along the frontier was by no means even, and application of the policy depended largely on who administered what parts of the frontier. In the 1860s and 70s, two broad based schools of thought on tribal

[45] Casualties for the tribes themselves are not mentioned. The “glory” of these raids, mainly accomplished by well-armed British and Gurkha troops with the occasional assistance of recruits from tribes under the British sway, and the numerous “treacheries” of the tribes is recounted in lurid detail in Hopkirk 1990 and Meyer and Brysac 1999.

management existed. The first, the "Punjab system," depended on political management of the tribes to keep trade roots open and minimize frontier violence. The second, the "Sindh system," managed the frontier by force, organizing armed repression in response to "violations" on the part of the tribes. Under Lytton's administration (1876-80), these questions were resolved and consolidated through a policy of "treating all frontier questions as parts of a whole question, and not as separate questions having no relation to each other" (Lytton quoted in Sharma 1986, 213). Lytton largely adopted the policy of the Punjab school as spearheaded by Robert Sandman. Further, as Sharma argues:

> Complete knowledge of the region by its thorough investigation and survey was the first principle that Lytton adopted to replace the "know-nothing" policy of his predecessors. Efficient administration of the frontier and its proper political management and military control was another thing dear to him as was the control and befriending of the frontier tribes to wean them away from Kabul. Occupation of places of strategic importance was another essential requirement of his frontier policy, as pointed out earlier (Sharma 1986, 215).

This involved not just heightened projects of information gathering, but also the territorial entrenchment of military power and territorial reconfigurations to bring the areas under more direct political control. These projects were carried out, respectively, through the establishment in 1876 and re-establishment in 1888 of the Gilgit Agency as a British outpost from which a trusted officer could access, negotiate with and control tribal leaders in surrounding areas (Keay 1979) and through the creation of the "North-West Frontier Province," a partitioning of the sensitive frontier zone from the rest of Punjab, by Curzon in 1901.[46]

Indeed, British colonial management led to a series of conflicts with tribal

[46] It is interesting to note here Curzon's penchant for solving political problems through a colonial form of redistricting. This project was to be decidedly less effective and more contentious in the partition of Bengal four years later.

groups in the area. Alder (1963), in his study of frontier policy describes the period from 1888-1895 as a series of "Pamir Crises", characterized by the continual uprising and settlement of groups along the frontier. In 1897, partly in response to the establishment of the Durand Line, which officially marked the boundary between British India and Afghanistan, the North-West Frontier exploded in revolt against colonial rule and village after village rose and attacked British outposts and regiments. The uprising lasted for over six months.

Even from this brief history,[47] largely drawn from research either seeking to detail British policy or valorize England's role in the Great Game, it is apparent that questions of negotiation over territory were critical and ongoing along the North-West Frontier. That this history is marginalized in Curzon's narrative and presented from a top-down perspective in official histories of the region is not surprising[48]. Indeed, while much of this writing has highlighted the violence inherent in state-formation along the frontier, I would like to return to the ambiguity represented in the Reconnaissance zone and briefly suggest that, beyond violent suppression and armed uprisings, imperial policy and territorial reorganization, what was happening along the North-West Frontier was also a process of negotiation for access to space and political power. I will do this by looking at three vignettes from narratives produced by colonial officers stationed in or traveling through the North-West frontier in the years leading up to the turn of the century. I make no claim that this represents a comprehensive retelling of frontier history, only that such narratives can be shown to further puncture the idea of a neatly defined colonial state space as imagined by

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[47] It is beyond the scope of this essay to offer a complete history of the enormously complex politics of the North-West Frontier management. What I have tried to do is offer a brief sketch that highlights the importance of negotiations over territory in the administration of this critical colonial zone.

[48] Indeed, a history of the North-West Frontier written from a subaltern perspective is yet to be written An initial foray has been offered, in the context of Baluchistan, by Simanti Dutta in her *Imperial Mappings* (2002). Mukulika Banerjee offers an account of Pathan resistance in a period slightly later than the one discussed here in her *The Pathan Armed* (2000).

Curzon and adopted into the social sciences through Weber. These particular negotiations suggest a historical encounter that can only be described within specific zones of encounter.

This first excerpt is from Francis Younghusband's narrative of travel into Northern Kashmir, Ladakh, and Yarkand in 1889. Younghusband, one of the key players in the great game (Hopkirk 1990), was sent on a mission both directly cartographic and diplomatic. While nominally surveying the area to increase cartographic knowledge, Younghusband and his team explored a series of passes along their route to evaluate the possibility of a Russian invasion.[49] More importantly, Younghusband was sent to negotiate territorial control and patronage with the Raja of Hunza, who had been, at the time, conducting raids on neighboring areas within nominal British control, attacking merchant caravans, and proving to be generally difficult for other British officials and outposts in the area.[50] This excerpt is from Younghusband's interview with the Raja:

> He then came to the real point of the interview, and asked me why the Mehtar of Chitral had been made so great and he had not. I answered that a few years ago Colonel Lockhart had visited both this country and Chitral, and had made the Mehtar great, and that, as since then he had served the British Government well, Captail Durand had this year been sent to make him still greater; but that when Colonel Lockhart visited Hunza, he (Safder Ali Khan) was not then Raja, so, till this year, we knew nothing of him; and as he had received a Russian last year, we could not, till we had visited him, tell whether he was our friend or the Russians', and therefore at present, would not make him very great. He then asked that a difference might be made between him and the Nagar Raja, and that he might be made equal with the Mehtar. I replied that this was Captain Durand's business and had nothing to do with me, but that I hoped that when he had given good proof of his loyalty to the British, his subsidy might be increased in the same way as the Mehtar of Chitral's had

[49] The urgency of this exploration was punctuated by Younghusband's encounter "on the roof of the world" with his Russian counterpart, Colonel Grombtchevski who, over tea, recounted his recent expedition into nominally British territory in Chitral.

[50] It is important to note that these were charges that were regularly leveled at tribes singled out for military "punishment." Further, the discourse of Hunza residents as raiders was part of a colonial ethnology of the North-West Frontier (Shafqat Hussain, personal communication). Therefore Younghusband's account of Hunza transgressions is to be taken with a large grain of salt.

> been in return for doing us good service.
>
> He then asked that he might receive his Kashmir subsidy at Gilgit instead of having to send to Jamu for it. I again told him that all this was Captain Durand's business and that I could only inform him of his wish, but could say nothing definite myself. He pressed me again, saying it was the one thing he wanted, and evidently believing that I could, if I chose, accede to his request, but I would only repeat my former answer. After this he was rather churlish for a short time, but subsequently recovered his better temper and we parted quite friendly, and he told me that he liked me because I looked him in the face, and he could see through me like glass, that there was nothing behind what I said; and this, indeed, was the case, for I spoke to him decidedly and clearly on matters of business, though making a number of polite speeches when politeness required, as this is evidently the best plan when dealing with these wild people" (Younghusband 1890, 82-3).

The meeting between Younghusband and the Raja of Hunza is, very much, a negotiation for space, access, and control. Here, in Younghusband's visit to discipline the unruly Raja, one can see a particular kind of negotiated power that is resonant with Corrigan and Sayer's notion of state formation as cultural revolution. As the two authors suggests,

> States, if the pun be forgiven, *state*; the arcane rituals of a court of law, the formulae of royal assents to an Act of Parliament, visits of school inspectors, are all statements. They define, in great detail, acceptable forms and images of social activity and individual and collective identity; they regulate, in empirically specifiable ways, much… of social life. Indeed, in this sense, the state never stops talking" (Corrigan and Sayer 1985, 3).

The visit of a colonial frontier officer to an "unruly" tribe must also be read, in this sense, as a statement: a bid to discipline and regulate the Raja's behavior, a claim for control, and an implicit threat of force. Yet it is also a negotiation for position and advantage. The Raja of Hunza's iterative demands can be understood both as an attempt to win money, power, and influence—to be made "great"—in exchange for loyalty and as a probing of the limits of colonial knowledge and individual authority. While the Raja's negotiations are, at least in Younghusband's account, unsuccessful, they suggest a particular power-laden dialogue around defining the contours of rule.

At stake is the tenuous access to space controlled by the Raja of Hunza, a space that, as the presence of a Russian officer suggests, is, though nominally within the boundaries of British empire, very much in question.[51] This suggests of a tension in state formation, a process that can best be thought of as a negotiation. Going beyond a colonial articulation of the master/slave dialectic (c.f. Comaroff and Comaroff 1988), territory here shown to be a negotiation over space, power, fealty, and rule. What is at stake in Younghusband's negotiations is the working out of particular positions, the establishment of the boundaries and tensions of power. The securing of territory is based around negotiations for position between a colonial officer and the Raja of one of Curzon's "unpopulated" zones. Here, the notion of reconnaissance can be rethought not as a process of scientifically or panoptically marking territory, but rather negotiating claims to an imperial vision of state space.

These themes are further articulated in this second passage from Algeron Durand's memoir of his time as a frontier officer, suggestively titled *The Making of a Frontier*. Durand was head of the Gilgit Agency, one of Lytton's innovations for establishing more direct control of the frontier. Indeed Durrand's posting at Gilgit and his subsequent demarcation of the boundary between Afghanistan and British India, were major factors contributing to the outbreak of armed revolt in 1897. This account relates to an 1889 visit by Durand to Chitral at roughly the same time as Younghusband's visit to Hunza. His goal was to re-affirm the loyalty of the Mehtar of Chitral to the Crown, to explore the possibilities of the construction of a road connecting Gilgit and Chitral, and to position himself near Hunza in case Younghusband needed support.

On arrival at Gakuch I found letters from the Mehtar warning me that

[51] Earlier in Younghusband's travels, he had been expelled from a section of the frontier by a Colonel Yanov, a Russian officer claiming that Younghusband, who was nominally within the Indian border, was on "Russian" territory.

> Raja Akbar Khan of Punyal, in league with the people of Darel and Tangir, in the Indus Valley, had arranged to attack my camp a day's march from Gakuch. The Mehtar solemnly warned me against coming by the direct road over the Shandur to Chitral, and begged me to wait till Nizam-ul-Mulk came to escort me with a suitable force. I was then to march by the Yasin Valley, cross the Darkot Pass, and reach Chitral by the upper road. The whole thing was a plot got up to embroil me if possible with Akbar Khan, whom the Mehtar hated, and to show the necessity for his being able to repel attacks from Yaghistan, as the independent territory in the Indus Valley is called. The Mehtar had over-reached himself for once, for I had sent trustworthy men into both Darel and Tangir some time before, and they had just returned reporting everything quiet. Further, he had mentioned as Akbar Khan's accomplice in the plot the man whom I knew to be the latter's bitterest enemy. I wrote at once to the Mehtar saying that I should come by the Shandur or not at all, and that I expected him to make the necessary arrangements for the safety of our party. At the same time I wrote to our native Agent who would, I knew, pass on the gist of my letter to the Mehtar, that the latter's story was untrue. I told him that if my camp was attacked it would be at the Mehtar's instigation, and that if he could not guarantee the safety of a small country the Government of India would attach very little importance to his friendship, and that there would certainly be no question of receiving any proof of its good will.
>
> I then sat down at Gakuch for a week to give my letters time to arrive, knowing my hint would be sufficient, and that I should hear no more of impending attacks. It would have been stupid to go on at once, for had an attack come off I should have been naturally blamed by Government for disregarding the Mehtar's warning, and I should have played into my old friend's hands. I knew he was quite capable of arranging a small fight, so that he might reap the reward of having come to my assistance (Durand, 177-8).

Durand's account, like Younghusband's, glorifies himself as the knowledgable frontier officer. Not only does Durand's understanding of the complicated politics of the frontier make him an ideal "man on the spot," but they also allow him to play a game of frontier politics that involves positioning different tribal factions against one another. What lies underneath Durand's self valorization is, again, a more interesting story about the negotiation for territory along the North-West Frontier. The politics of allegiance and fealty make the easy marking off of territory as state/non-state impossible. Indeed, the shifting terrain of tribal politics and the ambiguous state of Durand as a British official are highlighted in the Mehtar's attempted ruse. Here, even the routs that Durand takes to move from one section of the frontier to the next are

sites for power struggles and negotiations. This narrative also complicates a picture of state driven violence and tribal resistance painted by the limited histories of the frontier. Here the threat of attack is revealed as a tactical ploy, a reminder that the project of "securing" the frontier is not simply a question of defending against Russian attack, but is also about maintaining strategic and generous relationships with powerful individuals (such as the Mehtar) who have the ability both to provide protection and to manufacture complicated and dangerous moves and countermoves. Control of the monopoly on violence is as unclear here as control of the territory. The notion of the Great Game, in this sense, is expanded in the Mehtar's ploy, to include those with more direct control over the space claimed by competing colonial powers as central, not secondary, figures.

The final vignette I will explore is from C. M. Enriquez, a Lieutenant in the 21st Punjab stationed on the North-West Frontier from 1905-1908. Enriquez was not in the same position of power as Durand and Younghusband, and his account is much more concerned with the day-to-day details of frontier life than either of the other two. What is interesting about reading Enriquez is the more complete picture of the process of territorialization being employed "on the ground" by the British Frontier Administration. In this passage, Enriquez offers an exhaustive look at the territorial expansion in the Chitral region.

> A glance at the net work [*sic*] of road and railway communications, which forms an essential feature in the scheme for efficient control, shows how comprehensive are the detailed arrangements for the protection of the North-West Frontier. The extension of the Pindi-Kashmir cart-road from Bandipur to Gilgit is one of the finest mountain roads in the world, and negotiates some difficult and lofty passes. Chitral is connected by telegraph with India by a line running around *via* Gilgit; that route being less exposed to mischievous interruptions than would be the more direct one through Dir. The Road from Chakdara, over the Lowarai Pass to Chitral is everywhere six feet wide, and is bridged throughout by wire bridges. Communcation between Gilgit and Chitral is now much improved, and telephones are extensively used in Killa Drosh. Information regarding the routes beyond Chitral is always available, and the

> passes are visited and reported on yearly. The outbreak of 1897, and the consequent isolation of the Malakand, showed the necessity of a railway line from Nowshera to Dargai, through a broad gauge line would certainly help better to develop the trade which is yearly increasing, and which in 1910 amounted to 23 lakhs rupees. The road up the Khyber Pass has been so far improved that heavy guns can go with ease as far as Torkham, on the Afghan border. The broad gauge line extends now to Jamrud. Work on the still incomplete Loi Shilman railway came to a standstill during the late Mohmand expedition. It is finished and ready for use as far as Shahid Miana, about six miles up the Cabul River gorge, beyond Warsak. The Khyber Pass is further outflanked by the excellent Malagori road, which leaves the Peshwar vale near Shahgai. Reliable communication between Kohat and Peshwar through the Kohat Pass has been established at last, and an excellent tonga road, through the projecting neck of Afridi country, is now quite safe for travelers. Kohat is further linked to the main line by the recent completion of the railway bridge over the Indus at Kushalgarh; and the Samana and Kurram have been placed within easy reach of Kohat by the Miranzai Valley line. A road fit for big guns runs throughout the length of the Kurram to the foot of the Peiwar Kotal, on the Afghan border; and the Tochi is similarly provided with a tonga road to Datta Khel. The once inaccessible Bannu is now connected by road with both Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan. So not only within the administrative border is there a complete system of road and telegraph communications but long feelers have been thrown right forward through independent territory towards the Durand line, in the directions of Chitral, Lundi Kotal, the Kurram and Waziristan, thus enabling us to maintain a footing amongst our troublesome neighbors. Further, intimate and direct political intercourse with the trans-frontier tribes has been facilitated by the creation, in August 1900, or the North-West Frontier Province (Enriquez 1921 [1909], 3-5).

Enriquez's account reads well with Goswami's articulation of colonial state space as a "complex ensemble of practices, ideologies, and state projects that underpinned the restructuring of the institutional and spatiotemporal matrices of colonial power and everyday life" (2004, 8). The processes of establishing communication and defense in the North-West Frontier here appear as a system of linking the chaotically and unevenly divided tribal space of the frontier zone. In short, they are a system of rationalizing disparate places into a colonial state space. Yet, at the same time, the defense that Enriquez highlights in the beginning of this passage must be recognized as an internal defense, not an external one. The processes listed here are conceived in relation to another feared Pathan revolt, as opposed to Russian

incursion into Indian territory. Enriquez's account, almost fifteen years later than Durand and Younghusband's, suggests a progressive entrenchment of British infrastructure along the North-West Frontier, yet it also suggests a virtual explosion of tactics for *trying* to regularize and solidify territorial claims. At the same time, the particular configuration of these projects highlights the instability of colonial state space (for example, in the need to establish roundabout communication networks between Gilgit and Chitral to avoid "mischievous interruptions"). As such, the emphasis on the development of roads and communication networks should not be read as the successful creation of colonial state space, but rather as projects that attempt its accomplishment at the same time that they betray the incomplete nature of the production of such space. One might read, in Enriquez's narrative, negotiation for access being replaced by more "permanent" claims for control. Yet, as much of Enriquez's account suggests, fifteen years after Durand and Younghusband's narratives, the encaging of social relations within territorial projects of rule (Goswami 2004) was still an incomplete and uneven project. Indeed, much of Enriquez's book relates the ongoing and regular negotiations, competing rituals of control and rule, and uncertainties of British colonial control in the North-West Frontier.

What is suggestive about these three narratives is their demonstration that the colonial state space posited within what I have called the colonial theory of frontiers can be understood as no more than an unrealized claim. To modify Thongchai's suggestive phrase, these claims were models for, rather than models of, what they claimed to represent. They masked the tenuous hold on space in frontier zones and the struggles to establish territorial control, power, and access that made up the contours of frontier life. Indeed, the three narratives discussed in this chapter are notable not so much for their uniqueness, but rather as examples of quotidian, everyday process "managing" territory along the North-West Frontier. My interest is not to deny the

brutal violence employed by British officers in securing the frontier, nor to suggest that agency was held solely by the tribal leaders who were the regular subject of colonial projects of state formation. Rather, I simply wish to processes of defining territory along the North-West Frontier cannot be easily subsumed within colonial theories of frontiers that posit a simplistic notion of colonial state space. Rather, territory and access, power and control were the subject of regular struggles and negotiations between colonial officers attempting to "make" the frontier and those who stood in their way.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION: TERRITORY AT THE BORDERS

At the beginning of this thesis, I suggest that borders and frontiers were places that contributed to what Abrams (1988) calls the "state idea," the mask of political power that prevents us from seeing the state system as it is, a system of organized political subjection. Abrams, in his classic essay "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," argues that notions of "the state" passed down from Marxist historical and political theory and Weberian and Durkheimian political sociology accepted a reified, uniform, centralized and abstracted notion of "the state" that afforded the concept a unity of logic, power, and control that do not, in practice, exist. Indeed, Abrams suggests that these notions of the state unquestioningly accept an ideological construction of state power, a mask created through political practice and theorization by the state system itself. The theoretical and methodological challenge put forward by Abrams, the "difficulty of studying the state," was to simultaneously explore the construction of this ideological "mask" which obscures as it constitutes political power, and to understand the uneven contours of political practice. This project, as Abrams suggests, allows us to see "the state" as a claim to unified logic that smoothes and legitimizes the uneven, violent, and, possibly, illegitimate practice[52] of organized political subjection.

In this thesis, I have tried to take Abrams' call for a double examination, the study of the ideological mask of political power and the political practice which it obscures, seriously. By exploring the theorization of frontiers as the protective boundaries of the colonial space, I suggest that Curzon and his contemporaries were

[52] As Abrams observes, if the activities of the state are indeed legitimate, why is there a need for, what he calls, all the legitimation work?

involved in a project of constructing a notion of colonial state space that implicitly naturalized and smoothed over the instabilities and negotiated character of territory within the claimed colonial borders. At the same time, I problematize this view by looking at one of the discourses (maps) involved in the construction of borders and frontiers by reading narratives of frontier officers against the grain of the official theorization of colonial state space. While this latter part of my project is far from a complete reconstruction, by reading colonial frontier theory and the "on the ground" practices of making the frontier, I hope to have shown two things. We can, first, begin to understand colonial frontier theory as a claim to having accomplished a particular kind of rule and, second, understand what this claim obscures.

Also, I have attempted to make a case for a reevaluation of social science common sense understandings of "territory." In a separate paper, my co-authors and I argue for a sociology of displacement that understands states not as abstract entities but rather as the outcomes of complex sets of decisions embedded in space and time; as a social process that reconfigures and is reconfigured by particular power relationships; and as constituted and experienced through the interplay of multiple agencies, struggles, and interests (Cons, Feldman, and Geisler forthcoming). Drawing on this approach, which necessarily sees all processes of territory making as displacing, I have tried to posit a more fluid understanding of territory than that suggested by Weberian political sociology. Here, we might understand territory as a site of multiple and negotiated claims to controlling space. These claims are always contingent and contested, mediated by other competing claims, and situated within the particular spatial and historical politics that constitute both the particularities of place and its relationship with broader world-historical processes.

Curzon's theorization of frontiers erases the negotiation and violence, contingency and instability involved in making the frontier at the "ground level." Yet

the colonial project of theorizing frontiers be seen as independent or outside of this process. Rather, Curzon's conscious configuration of frontiers in relation to colonial expansion, an expansion that is necessarily seen as natural and limited by collision with another expanding colonial power, must be understood as part of the legitimating project of state power. This colonial theory of frontiers collapses complex practices of creating something called British India into a uniform, manageable, and contained colonial state space. As such, we should not take Curzon's suggestion that processes of tribal management, negotiation, and access are secondary to the grand imperial purpose of the colonial frontier at face value. In this sense, Curzon's writing bears interesting comparisons to what Sankaran Krishnan has usefully termed "cartographic anxiety." Krishnan uses the term to capture the tensions around the imagining of post-colonial India's geo-body, the fears of losing particular pieces off the map, and the tensions and difficulties that insistence on national territorial unity cause for those living in border zones. As he writes, "this preoccupation with a national space and with borders can only approximate a historical original that never existed except as the teleos of the narrative of modernity: a pure, unambiguous community called the homeland" (1996, 209). Though Krishnan posits this as a particularly postcolonial condition, I would suggest that looking at colonial frontier theory and the making of the North-West Frontier is one place where cartographic anxiety might be seen in the production of colonial space, as well. Here, we can see both Curzon's lecture and maps as claims to a pure and unambiguous state territorial unity at the same time as we can read them as indicators of incomplete negotiations to impose such views of space on place. Understanding colonial cartographic anxiety in and about the North-West Frontier shows the tensions inherent in producing colonial state space and the uneven terrain of negotiated power and resistance that are masked by the unproblematic map

Year.	Tribes against which undertaken.	Name of Commander.	Number of troops employed.*	Total British casualties.
1849	Villages of British and independent Baeza (Swāt).	Lieutenant-Colonel J. Bradshaw, C.B.	2,300	51
1850	Kohāt Pass Afrīdis.	Brigadier Sir Colin Campbell, K.C.B., (accompanied by the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir C. J. Napier, G.C.B.).	3,200	94
1851	Villages of British Mīrānzai.	Captain J. Coke .	2,500 (including 655 levies).	5
1851–2	Mohmands . .	Brigadier Sir Colin Campbell, K.C.B.	1,597	9
1852	Mohmands (Affair at Panjpao).	,, ,,	600	10
,,	Ravizai . . .	,, ,,	3,270	40
,,	Utman Khel . .	,, ,,	2,200	18
,,	Umarzai (Ahmadzai) Wazīrs.	Major J. Nicholson .	1,500	28
1852–3	Hasanzai . .	Lieutenant-Colonel F. Mackeson, C.B.	3,800 (including Kashmīr troops, levies, and police, but excluding the reserve).	18
1853	Hindustāni Fanatics	,, ,,	2,000 (including Kashmīr troops).	*Nil*
,,	Shirānis . . .	Brigadier J. S. Hodgson.	2,795	*Nil*
,,	Bori Afrīdis . .	Colonel S. B. Boileau	1,740	39
1854	Michni Mohmands .	Colonel S. J. Cotton	1,782	17
1855	Aka Khel Afrīdis .	Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Craigie, C.B.	1,500	34
,,	Villages of British Mīrānzai.	Brigadier N. B. Chamberlain.	3,766	15
,,	Rabia Khel Orakzais	,, ,,	2,457	15
1856	Turis . .	,, ,,	4,896 (including 150 levies).	8
1857	British villages on the Yūsufzai border.	Major J. L. Vaughan	400 In attack on Shaikh Jana.	5
			990 (including 140 levies) in the first attack on Narinji.	26
			1,625 (including 323 levies) in the second attack on Narinji.	9

* The numbers given in this column are in some cases only approximate, it being impossible in these cases to discover from the records the exact number of troops employed.

Figure 8: Expeditions Undertaken Against Frontier Tribes Since the Annexation of Punjab, *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. 19, pg 208.*

Year.	Tribes against which undertaken.	Name of Commander.	Number of troops employed.*	Total British casualties.
1859	Khudu Khel and Hindustāni Fanatics.	Major-General Sir S. J. Cotton, K.C.B.	4,877	35
1859-60	Kābul Khel Wazīrs.	Brigadier-General Sir N. B. Chamberlain, K.C.B.	5,372 (including 1,456 police and levies).	20
1860	Mahsūds. . .	,, ,,	6,796 (including 1,600 levies).	361
1863	Hindustāni Fanatics	Brigadier-General Sir N. B. Chamberlain, K.C.B., and subsequently Major-General J. Garvok.	9,000	908
1864	Mohmands . .	Colonel A. Macdonell, C.B.	1,801	19
1868	Bizoti Orakzai. .	Major L. B. Jones .	970 (including 240 police and levies).	55
,,	Black Mountain Tribes.	Major-General A. T. Wilde, C.B., C.S.I.	12,544 (exclusive of a reserve of 2,218).	98†
1869	Bizoti Orakzai. .	Lieutenant-Colonel C. P. Keyes, C.B.	2,080 (including 419 police and levies).	36
1872	Dauris . . .	Brigadier-General C. P. Keyes, C.B.	1,826	6
1877	Jowaki Afrīdis .	Colonel D. Mocatta .	1,750 (exclusive of levies).	11
1877-8	,, .	Brigadier-Generals C. P. Keyes, C.B., and C. C. G. Ross, C.B.	7,400	61
1878	Utman Khel . .	Captain W. Battye .	280	8
,,	Rānizai . . .	Major R. B. P. P. Campbell.	860	*Nil*
,,	Utman Khel . .	Lieutenant-Colonel F. H. Jenkins.	875	1
,,	Zakka Khel Afrīdis.	Lieutenant-Colonel F. F. Maude, V.C., C.B.	2,500	11
,,	Powindas, Sulaimān Khel, and others.	Colonel H. F. M. Boisragon.	640	13
1879	Zakka Khel Afrīdis.	Lieutenant-Colonel F. F. Maude, V.C., C.B.	3,750	18
,,	Mohmands (Affair at Kam Dakka).	Captain O'M. Creagh, and subsequently Major J. R. Dyce.	600	24
,,	Zaimukhts . .	Brigadier-General J. A. Tytler, V.C., C.B.	3,226	5

* The numbers given in this column are in some cases only approximate, it being impossible in these cases to discover from the records the exact number of troops employed.

† This number includes the casualties (64) in the Agror valley previous to the advance of the Hazāra Field Force.

Figure 9: Expeditions Undertaken Against Frontier Tribes Since the Annexation of Punjab Continued, *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. 19, pg 209.*

Year.	Tribes against which undertaken.	Name of Commander.	Number of troops employed.*	Total British casualties.
1880	Mohmands . .	Brigadier-General J. Doran, C.B., and Colonel T. W. R. Boisragon.	2,300	5
,,	Bhittannis . .	Lieutenant - Colonel P. C. Rynd.	721	5
,,	Kābul Khel (Utmanzai) Wazīrs.	Brigadier-General J. J. H. Gordon, C.B.	800	*Nil*
1881	Mahsūds . .	Brigadier-Generals T. G. Kennedy, C.B., and J. J. H. Gordon, C.B.	8,531	32
1888	Hasanzai, Akozai, Parari Saiyids and Tikariwal.	Major-General J. W. McQueen, C.B., A.D.C.	12,554	
1890	Kidderzai Section of Largha Shirānis.	General Sir G. S. White, V.C., G.C.B.	1,750†	1
1891	Hasanzai and Akozai	Major-General W. K. Elles, C.B.	7,300	48
,,	Orakzai . . .	Major-General Sir W. S. A. Lockhart, K.C.B., C.S.I.	7,381	95
1892	Isazai Clans . .	,, ,,	5,997	*Nil*
1894–5	Mahsūds . .	,, ,,	10,631	23
1896	Umra Khān of Jandol (Chitrāl Relief Force).	Major-General Sir R. C. Low, K.C.B.	14,900	122
1897	(1) Swātis and Utman Khel.	Major-General Sir Bindon Blood, K.C.B.	8,071	532
	(2) Bunerwal and Chamlawal.			
,,	Darwesh Khel Wazīrs	...	...	...
,,	Mohmands . .	Major-General E. R. Elles, C.B.	6,458	30
1897–8	Darwesh Khel Wazīrs	Major-General G. Corrie-Bird, C.B.	7,262	17
,,	Afrīdis and Orakzai .	Major-General Sir W. S. A. Lockhart, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.	40,000	1,019
1900–1	Mahsūds. . .	General W. Hill, C.B., from December 1, 1900, to August, 1901. Thereafter Brigadier-General Denning, D.S.O.	12,448	136
1902	Kābul Khel (Utmanzai) Wazīrs.	Major-General Sir C. C. Egerton, K.C.B., D.S.O.	2,880	21

* The numbers given in this column are in some cases only approximate, it being impossible in these cases to discover from the records the exact number of troops employed.

† Number of Punjab columns only: two other columns, operating from Baluchistān, took part in the expedition.

Figure 10: Expeditions Undertaken Against Frontier Tribes Since the Annexation of Punjab Continued, *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. 19, pg 210.*

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